Photo *Holland.*

I till the garden every day,
  Attending to its needs;
I thirst exceedingly to slay
  And spiflicate the weeds.

'Tis bliss to plant the verdant pea,
  So round, so deprecating,
And dig it up again, to see
  If it is germinating.

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HIDE AND SEEK.

From the Painting by Fred Morgan.

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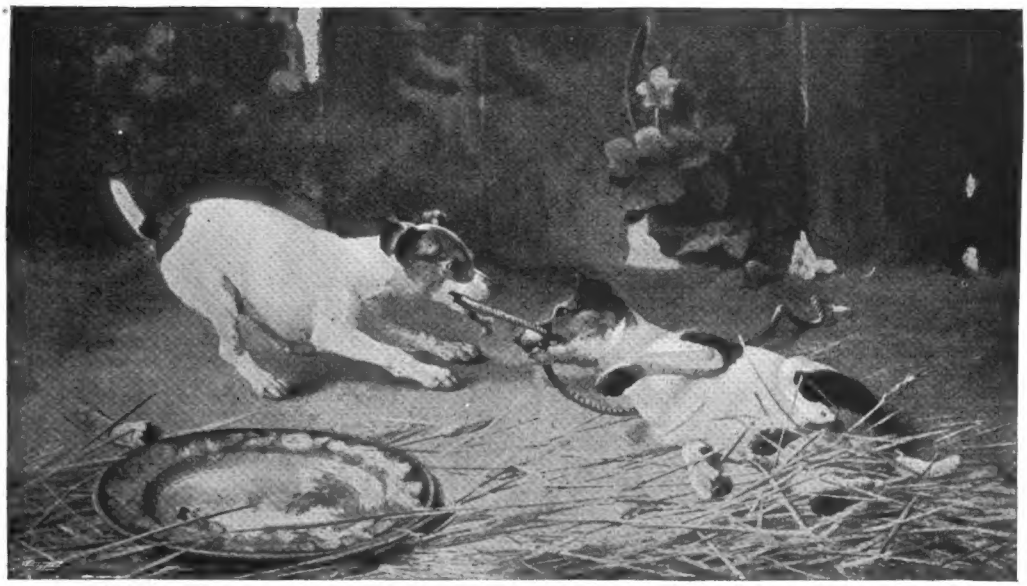

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A Tug of War.

From the painting by Allanson Cull.

DOG STORIES.

Interesting Anecdotes of Canine Sagacity.

By Rudolph de Cordova.

The love of animals in general, and of dogs in particular, is one of the "soft spots" in the human heart, and there are probably few to whom authentic stories of the creature which has come to be regarded as "the friend of man" do not appeal.

Mr. George Giddens, the well-known actor, has a chow which always, of its own accord, distinguishes Sunday from every other day of the week. On Sunday Mr. Giddens takes the dog for a walk. As soon as he puts on his hat, the chow trots up to him and stands ready to go out when the door is opened. Yet on the other six days of the week he will lie perfectly quiet and watch Mr. Giddens brush his hat and put on his coat without thinking of moving, unless Mr. Giddens happens to say "Yes." Then, with every mark of delight, the dog jumps up to enjoy the unexpected treat.

Mr. Giddens' brother is no less fond of dogs. One of his, a spaniel, was the hero of a decidedly humorous incident.

Staying in the country, Mr. Giddens had gone for a walk with the dog, and stopped at a little inn to get some refreshment. There were several old farmers, whose knowledge of dogs was probably confined to sheepdogs, for they made fun of the spaniel.

"Well," said Mr. Giddens, "you may not think much of my dog, but he is so clever that he can read."

The men were amazed. Mr. Giddens took an envelope out of his pocket, and suggested that each of the farmers should write something on a piece of paper, the dog being sent out of the room all the time. The papers were then placed in a row, the door was opened, and the dog was called in.

"Fetch me my letters," said Mr. Giddens to his pet. The dog went up to the papers and walked along the line until it came to Mr. Giddens' envelope, which it picked up in its mouth and took to its master. The men were so astonished that one of them actually offered a £5 note for it, which, it need hardly be said, was refused.

The explanation is, of course, of the simplest. It was the dog's sense of smell which enabled it to discover its master's letter, and not, as he pretended, its ability to read, though the way the spaniel passed along

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the line of envelopes with its nose close to the paper suggested that it was really reading and not merely sniffing at them.

Similar intelligence to that displayed by Mr. Giddens' dog was shown by Sir Walter Scott's bull-terrier Camp, which he describes as "the wisest dog I ever had." Sir Walter taught him to understand many words.

On one occasion Camp bit the baker. Sir Walter punished the animal severely for its misconduct. Ever after, whenever Camp heard Sir Walter tell the story, he retired into a corner and showed the utmost distress both in manner and bearing. There the dog remained until Sir Walter remarked that the baker was well paid or was not hurt, when Camp would come out capering, barking loudly, and giving every sign of rejoicing.

When Sir Walter went out riding, the dog would invariably meet him on his return. It would wait indoors, however, until it heard the servant say Sir Walter was coming down the hill or through the moor. So clearly did it differentiate between the two that, if Sir Walter were returning down the hill Camp would go and meet him through the front door, but if it were through the moor he would go by the back way.

A whole article, if not, indeed, a whole book, might be devoted to the recorded instances in which dogs have remained to watch the graves in which their dead masters have been buried. Among the striking instances of this kind which have inspired painters with subjects for pictures is the case of "Greyfriars Bobby," whose picture was engraved by Mr. Gourlay Steele, R.S.A.

Bobby belonged to a poor man named Grey, who died and was buried in the old Greyfriars Churchyard. The grave was filled up and the gates closed. Next morning, when the sexton went into the churchyard, he saw a dog lying on the newly-raised mound. Dogs were not allowed in the churchyard, so he drove it out, and locked the gate. The following morning the dog was lying on the grave again. A second time the sexton turned it out, and locked the gate. The third morning the rain was pouring in torrents. Yet when the sexton went into the churchyard there was Bobby lying on his master's grave. The man was so touched by the incident that he allowed the animal to remain, and it practically made its home there. No matter how rough the night, no matter how cold the day, Bobby was always to be found at his self-appointed post.

In time, the fact got to the ears of the general public. One gentleman was so touched that he sent an order for a supply of steaks for Bobby's food, and the keeper of a restaurant in the Greyfriars Road eventually succeeded in teaching the animal to call there for its meals. So regularly did Bobby go that the proprietor of the restaurant was actually summoned on one occasion for the dog-tax on the ground that he harboured the animal. The restaurant was in those days not open on Sunday. Bobby soon learnt the fact, and provided for his meal on that day by saving every day a certain portion of his food, which he hid under one of the tombstones.

At length, in consequence of certain alterations in the churchyard, the grave was levelled, and there was nothing to mark it. That, however, made no difference to the dog, for it knew the spot, and for over six years, until its own death, never failed to keep vigil over it.

A dog with a very large circle of acquaintances is the St. Bernard which figures in the well-known pictures "I'se Biggest" and "So Tired," by Mr. A. J. Elsley. Rollo, who was owned by a Mr. Winter, began his career on the stage in the West-end of London, and was so well trained that he used to get up and bark at a given cue, and never once made a mistake.

When he was painting "So Tired," Mr. Elsley, as is his custom, did not have the dog and the child at the same time, for experience has taught him that when the little ones and the animals are together they play, and it is impossible for him to work so quickly as when they are painted separately. Rollo used, therefore, to be placed on the sofa, with his head on a cushion, at the exact height at which the little girl would sit.

When the sittings for "I'se Biggest" were going on, Rollo, when he arrived at the studio, to which he was taken by his master or a boy, used always to lie down and rest after his walk from Wardour Street, where he lived, to St. John's Wood, where Mr. Elsley lived. When, however, he found that he was to sit on the sofa, which was softer, and, therefore, far more comfortable than the ground, he never would lie down, but would wait patiently until the sofa was pulled out and put into its place, when he would get on it, place his head on the cushion, and go to sleep.

Once or twice the cushion was found not to be quite right, and Rollo had to be awakened in order that it might be properly adjusted. After that had happened a couple of times he always waited to make quite sure

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"Don't Be Afraid."

From the painting by Arthur J. Elsley.

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that the cushion was exactly right before he went to sleep. So he would lie for hours, proving as fine a model as the heart of an artist could desire.

At four o'clock he used to be fetched by his master. A few minutes before that hour he would wake and raise his head from the cushion, from which nothing could move him earlier in the day. Then he would get off the sofa, and begin to grow uneasy. There was a grandfather clock in the studio, and as soon as it struck four he would begin to bark, as much as to say: "Time's up, and I'm not going to sit any more." If his master were a little late in fetching him no persuasion could induce Rollo to get back on the sofa. It was useless attempting to employ force, for when the great animal took up its stand it required much more than a man of ordinary strength to move it against its will.

One day a friend of Mr. Elsley was painting Rollo. Taking him home along Regent Street the artist missed him. Up the street he looked and down the street. At last he saw Rollo sitting contentedly in a restaurant being fed by a gentleman, who, struck with the animal's appearance, was sharing his meal with it. The artist got hold of the dog and tugged at it, but to no purpose, for he could not move it until it was ready to go of its own accord.

Rollo had the life-saving instinct of his kind highly developed. One day, Mr. Winter was going down Wardour Street with him. It was an extremely wet day, and a little girl had fallen into a pool of water. Rollo caught hold of her skirts, lifted her on to her feet, and then trotted away, having satisfied himself that he had done all that was necessary under the circumstances.

Another of the interesting dog models used by Mr. Elsley was Grizzle, the one which sat for "Soft Persuasion." It had a remarkable characteristic, for instead of wagging its tail from side to side, as dogs usually do, it used to wag it up and down. If it were taken for a walk, it always, on returning home, used to wipe its feet on the mat, having seen Mr. Elsley do so. While engaged in this highly meritorious act, it always growled incessantly, as if it were calling attention to its carefulness and adherence to the household regulations.

At one time, in the old Etruscan city of Ferentino, there was quite a celebrated dog of the pointer tribe, but by no means a pure-bred specimen. A gentleman has recorded that

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"A Towel, Please."

From the painting by Tom Bright.

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"Catch Me If You Can."

From the painting by L. Cheviot.

one day, just after he arrived, the dog went up to him, after attracting his attention, and began to beg. "What does he want?" the gentleman asked somebody standing near.

"A soldo to buy a cigar," was the reply.

The gentleman gave the coin to the dog, which went off and got the cigar and returned with it to him. This was repeated several times. When the dog returned for the last time its note changed entirely, and it began to whine in a plaintive sort of way. "What does it want now?" the gentleman asked.

"A soldo to buy bread," was the reply.

He gave the dog the money. It trotted off to the baker's, and returned with a roll, which it placed at his feet and then ate. It was explained to the gentleman that the dog always did that with every stranger in the town.

A certain dog used to be a good deal troubled by a lot of hens, which would steal its food out of the basin in which it was placed. One day, a hen was observed stealthily sidling up to the basin apparently doing everything in her power not to attract the notice of the dog, which was watching with half-closed eyes. At last the hen saw her opportunity, and made a dash for the basin. To her surprise, it was empty, for the dog had already eaten its meal. As the hen retired discomfited, the dog opened its eyes and wagged its tail. A human being with a whole dictionary full of words at his command could not have suggested the humour of the situation better.

Another dog lived in a house at which, one evening, a gentleman went to dine with the master. He had been paralysed on one side, and his leg was still somewhat disabled, so that he had to make use of a stick. When he was ready to go home, the dog happened to be in the drawing-room. The gentleman went downstairs dragging his lame leg along. When he got to the bottom, the dog started to go down the stairs. Instead of going down in the ordinary way, it lifted up one of its hind legs, and descended the stairs on three legs. The gentleman who recorded the incident,

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Too Risky.

From the painting by R. A. Dent.

stated that it was impossible for those who saw the incident to maintain their gravity, in spite of the fact that the last thing anyone would desire to do under such circumstances would be to smile.

That dogs are capable of arguing from cause to effect the following incident will show. Several children who lived in Kingston, Ontario, were playing on a quay which jutted into the lake. By an unfortunate accident, one of them fell off into the water. The children screamed for help. No one heard them. Just as the little one was sinking for the third time, a large Newfoundland dog, which was on the quay, jumped into the water, seized the child by the hair, and succeeded in getting it to land. The child's companions were overjoyed, and taking the dog with them to a confectioner's, bought a lot of cakes for it.

Next day, when the children were on the quay, the Newfoundland again turned up. The children began patting and caressing and generally making much of the dog, but no cakes were forthcoming. Watching its opportunity, when one of the little ones was close to the edge of the quay, the Newfoundland knocked against her. The child, of course, fell into the water. In a moment the Newfoundland jumped in after her and swam with her to shore, thus repeating the incident of the day before in the hope of meeting the same reward.

The knowledge of coins and their value which certain dogs possess is quite remarkable. Dr. Lawson Tait once recorded his experience of a brown retriever in Edinburgh, which knew the value of coins as well as a human being. Every morning it used to take its stand on the step of a fishmonger's shop, and wait until some passer-by gave it a coin. Immediately it would start off for the baker's for soda scones, which were the passion of its life. The dog knew that it got two scones for a penny and one for a halfpenny, and it was impossible to foist off on it one cake instead of two if the coin were of the larger denomination.

A similar characteristic was displayed by a dog named Hardy, after Nelson's Captain, which was made a pensioner at Greenwich Hospital. Hardy used to go every day to the butcher's to buy his own meat. He also soon became educated to the fact that two halfpenny worths were the equivalent of a penny.

On one occasion, when the British Association met in Glasgow, one of the members went over to Greenock on business. At lunch-time he entered a confectioner's, and began eating a bun. Presently a dog came in, and so evidently asked for a piece that the physician gave it.

After eating it, the dog began to beg again. The girl said it was begging for a halfpenny, and when the doctor asked her how she knew it, she answered that the dog was a constant customer, and often went into

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the shop to buy a cake. Not only that, but the animal knew exactly the kind of cake it wanted. The doctor handed a halfpenny to the dog. It put the halfpenny on the counter. The girl got a bun and offered it to the dog. It refused to touch it. "Oh, I think I know what it wants," she said, and took out a piece of shortbread. The dog accepted it with every mark of delight, and ate it on the spot.

The instances in which men and women, moved by affection, have lost their lives in the endeavour to save their dogs from fire, are innumerable. Not very long ago an English gentleman wrote to one of the daily newspapers, complaining that he was practically expatriated through his love of his dog. He had to go on the Continent, and when he desired to return he was refused a license for the animal under the Importation of Dogs Act.

"My dog," he wrote, "is old and delicate, and to put him for three months in a quarantine station would kill him; to leave him with strangers in a foreign country would also be fatal. So, as I cannot desert my four-footed friend, I am obliged to stay abroad with him.

"I have offered to send a veterinary surgeon's certificate to prove my dog is perfectly healthy, and I am willing to have him examined once a week for three months, and to remain in one place during that time; but all is of no avail."

The solution of the difficulty was an easy one, but the gentleman evidently preferred remaining abroad to coming home without his faithful friend and companion.

There are numerous stories of dogs which have found their way home under difficulties and after a long interval of time. Few, however, are more striking than the following:—

The chairman of one of the Gloucester benches of magistrates had a tenant who occupied a farm near the Severn, some three or four miles from Gloucester. He gave a favourite dog to his brother who was going to Canada, having taken a farm situated some days' journey in the interior. Shortly after the brother arrived at his destination the dog disappeared, and, although inquiries were made for it, it could not be found anywhere.

After some weeks, to the amazement of the farmer in Gloucester, the dog arrived at its old home, and the first night after its arrival took up its old position at the foot of its master's bed. The dog's return seemed so remarkable that inquiries were made, and it was

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Saved.

From the painting by Sir Edwin Landseer.

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traced backwards to the Severn, and thence to the ship at Bristol, which had brought it from Canada after it had run away from its home on the other side of the Atlantic.

Have dogs a sense of premonition or the ability to discover in advance danger which threatens those they love? The following incident recorded by Mr. Youatt in his "Humanity to Beasts" would at least suggest an answer in the affirmative. He had a Newfoundland dog named Carlo which was deeply attached to him, but circumstances arising which prevented his keeping the animal he gave it away, and four years passed without his ever seeing it.

One day, when out walking towards Kingston, he met the dog with its master at the top of the hill "where Jerry Abershaw's gibbet stood." The animal evinced the liveliest satisfaction at seeing its old master, and after the two gentlemen had talked for a few minutes they parted, going in opposite directions. When he got halfway down the hill Carlo returned to him, growling angrily and with his hair bristling all down his back.

"I looked to the right," said Mr. Youatt, "and there were two ill-looking fellows making their way through the bushes which then occupied the angular space between the Roehampton and Wandsworth roads. Their intention was scarcely questionable, and, indeed, a week or two before I had narrowly escaped from two miscreants like them."

Presently, one of the men came out of the wood, but when he saw Carlo and heard him growling, he took to his heels and ran. Carlo remained with Mr. Youatt until he reached the bottom of the hill, and then, evidently satisfied in its own mind that no harm would come to its former master, the dog trotted off in the opposite direction.

A little while ago at the London Hospital, a dog limped with great difficulty into the receiving room. On examination it was found that one of the hind legs had been badly cut. A surgeon washed, dressed, and bound up the wound, and the dog went away with a look of gratitude in its eyes. Next day it returned, and its daily visits were continued of its own accord until the wound was quite healed.

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A Disgrace to His Family.

from the painting by Stanley Berkeley.

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Aunt Cecilia.

By Hilda L. Dawson.

A Charade.

CHARACTERS:

MISS ARMITAGE.
MR. ARMITAGE, her brother.
MISS CICELY ARMITAGE, his daughter.
LADY FERGUSON, school-friend of Cicely.
MR. FREDDY A. FOSTER.
JANET, maid to Miss Armitage.

SCENE I.—*Drawing-room of* MISS A.'s *country house. Fire R. of stage, sofa L. Exits R. and L. Window back. A summer afternoon;* JANET *arranging flowers.*

MISS A. (*sitting R. by fire with letter*). Well, to think that my dear niece is coming to stay with me at last! It is very short notice, Janet, but my brother was always abrupt! (*Drawing shawl round her.*) I only hope she won't leave the doors open! Janet, I can't quite see, but I don't think that window is shut!

J. (*going to window*). It's shut tight, ma'am.

MISS A. Then it's one of the doors.

J. Oh no, ma'am. Is your niece to be a sort of lodger, ma'am?

MISS A. Janet! You *surprise* me! You can go.

J. (*walking L.*). *I've* done it now! But I'm glad to get out of this stifling place. (*Exit L.*).

MISS A. *Lodger*, indeed! How dare she? But five guineas a week will allow me to give to Lady Ferguson's fund—I forget what it is now—but she's a charming woman. (*Bell rings.*) Here they are! (*Enter* J. *and* MR. ARMITAGE *L.*)

Mr. A. No, I don't think I *can* have, or she would have come.

J. Mr. Armitage. (J. *exit L.*)

MISS A. (*meeting* MR. A. *centre of stage*). How do you do, James? Your letter was a great surprise to me—still I shall be delighted to take charge of Cicely—but where is she? You look worried!

MR. A. Oh, she lost the train, my dear—at least, if she ever meant to catch it. (*Fans himself.*) But I'm not worried, just a little—well, perturbed!

MISS A. (*sitting by fire*). But, James! Didn't you tell her to come with you?

MR. A. (*sitting L.*). No, I don't think I *can* have, or she would have come—she is *most* obedient, and I'm sure doesn't

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mean to distress me—but *I* don't know where she is!

MISS A. (*in horror*). James! James! *What* a troublesome girl!

MR. A. I assure you, my dear Cecilia, she doesn't *mean* to be troublesome. She is so fresh and young and simple, I'm sure you will love her. I do *hope* you can manage to have her just for the week I'm in Paris. I *don't* want to leave her alone!

MISS A. Who is she with now, pray?

MR. A. Really, my dear, I don't know. I think she jumped out of the train to talk to a friend—and, by the way, Cecilia, don't let her meet many people—she has so many friends—and—well, I've heard it *said* she's a flirt—but, of course, *I* don't know!

MISS A. James, you have deceived me. I'm sure I shall have a most trying time with Cicely!

MR. A. (*walking about in agitation*). No, no, my dear—but the fact is, I'm most anxious for her to marry a dear friend of mine—she doesn't *mean* to worry me, but she insists on saying "No" to him!

MISS A. You may be quite sure, James, there will be no young men *here* for her to play with!

MR. A. (*at door*). Don't worry, my dear—I don't—at least I *try* not to! I will write, Cecilia. (*Exit L.*).

MISS A. (*quite overcome*). Oh, my poor head! Janet! Janet! (J. *enters.*) I am very much upset, Janet; my niece has jumped off the train.

J. Oh, ma'am! While it was moving?

MISS A. I daresay. I really don't know! I feel extremely ill, Janet. I shall not long survive this! Apparently she is lost! (J. *fusses round* MISS A. CICELY *enters L. running. Stops short while* MISS A. *and* J. *stare, then runs forward.*)

C. Oh! Aunt Cecilia!

J. It's Miss Cicely, ma'am, I'm sure!

MISS A. Are *you* Cicely?

C. (*talking very fast and taking* MISS A.'s *hands*). Yes, rather, *I'm* Cicely! You're my auntie, I know, and its ripping of you to have me here with you, but *do* tell me—have you seen my daddy?

MISS A. What does she say, Janet?

C. Oh, please, Aunt Cecilia, has my dad been here and gone?

MISS A. Dear me—yes! I suppose you *are* my niece? How did you get here?

C. Oh, I came on by the next train. Daddy was *such* a goose! He ought to have told the guard to wait for me! But if he's got off all right I don't mind. He didn't *tell* me I was to come by that train, auntie! I always do what he tells me *somehow* or other! I'll just run and tell Freddy!

C. You see, auntie, daddy wouldn't like me to travel alone.

MISS A. (*sitting bolt upright*). Freddy! You've not brought a "Freddy" here, have you?

C. Yes. You see, auntie, daddy wouldn't like me to travel alone. I *always* do what he says, so Freddy came with me.

MISS A. Cicely, this is *most* upsetting for me! I will see no Freddy here, nor any other young man.

C. (*kissing* MISS A.). All right, auntie dear. I wouldn't worry you for anything, so I *w n't* bring him in here—we'll go into the garden. (*Runs to window.*) It's such a lovely garden, isn't it? I won't be long. (*Exit L.*)

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*As before. A week later.* CICELY *at table, centre, writing.*

C. (*blotting letter*). There! That ought to fetch her. It *is* jolly to find dear old Anna down here, after all. (*Reading letter.*) "DEAREST ANNA,—Do come to lunch to-morrow. I'm here with a newly-discovered aunt while dad's in Paris. I'm having an awful time. Freddy's always coming in, but Aunt Cecilia won't see him. If she only knew about dad—*you* know what I mean—she'd change her tune, I suppose. So glad she doesn't. F. is coming to-morrow—aunt will be out, but you are chaperon in case she comes back too soon.—Yours, CIS. P.S.—I've ten bob more for

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Miss A. Certainly not! I intend to keep this document.

your collecting-card." (*Exit L. J. enters R. with letter.*)

J. Thank goodness, Miss Armitage is up at at last! There's not much the matter with *her!* (*Puts letter on table.*) Oh, this window! (*Shuts it.* Miss A. *enters R.*)

Miss A. Was that the postman, Janet? Ah, yes—(*takes letter and sits by fire*)—I feel better to-day—but *is* that window shut?

J. Yes, ma'am!—*no* air can get in anywhere to-day, ma'am!

Miss A. (*opens and reads letter*). "DARLING C.,—It's all right about to-morrow—and you must give me what you promised—I can't wait any longer. *Do* be in this afternoon! Yours ever, F. A. F." What on *earth* is this?

J. Someone else's letter, ma'am, I should say. Let me fasten it up again, ma'am.

Miss A. Certainly not! I intend to keep this document. And, Janet, when Mr. Foster calls, say Miss Armitage is at home, and bring him up here! Leave me now. I must have time for reflection.

J. (*walking L.*). Oh my! Whatever will happen now? (*Exit L.*)

Miss A. (*walking about room*). I would rather *not* fig re on Lady Ferguson's collecting-card than have all this to put up with! Of course, *this* is some of the flirting James hinted at. Why can't she do what he wishes, and settle down with the husband he has chosen her? (*Picks up an open pocket-book from table.*) What's this? Cicely's money accounts! Careless child. (*Looks at a page.*) There! I *was* right. She *is* giving him money. F. A. F. five shillings; and here's another F. A. F. ten shillings! (*Sits by fire.*) Oh, James, James! what a discovery! (J. *enters L.*)

J. Here's Mr. Foster, ma'am. (J. *exit L. Enter* FREDDY *L.*)

F. Oh, Cis—you are a *brick* to be in—oh! (*Starts back. Aside.*) Aunt Cecilia! (*Pause.* Miss A. *puts on her glasses.*) I *beg* your pardon; I thought you were Cicely.

Miss A. *I* am Miss Armitage—and you are—Freddy?

F. (*very friendly*). Yes, yes. How d'you do? (*Offering hand.*)

Miss A. No, *thank* you. I disapprove of you most strongly. My niece can have no sense of duty to her father, or she would not encourage you to come here. Did you write this? (*Shows letter.*)

F. (*takes letter*). By Jove! My note to Cis! Yes, I did. But do let me explain, Miss Armitage. Cicely's father——

Miss A. Sir! Cicely's father is extremely annoyed with you—and all the rest of her youthful admirers. (*Goes to table and takes up book.*) And I'm not surprised. Kindly explain *your* initials being in my niece's account-book—F. A. F. five shillings—F. A. F. ten shillings!

F. (*surprised*). Miss Armitage——

Miss A. No, sir, you cannot explain. You have been extracting money from my niece—your note demands more!

F. Really, you're making an extraordinary mistake. (*Takes book.*) F. A. F.? It might be anything, mightn't it? Feathers and finery, for instance.

Miss A. (*sinks into chair*). Oh dear! Oh dear! Mr. Foster, I warn you—I am going to faint!

F. (*stamping to window*). I'm not surprised. There's not a breath of air in the room! (*Flings it open.*)

F. (*stamping to window*). I'm not surprised. There's not a breath of air in the room!

Miss A. (*screaming*). Janet! Janet! I shall *die!* Shut that window! (*Enter* CICELY *L., running.*)

C. What *is* the matter, Aunt Cecilia? (*Sees F.*) Freddy! Auntie said she wouldn't see you!

F. (*going L.*). Your aunt wished to see me, Cicely, so here I am!

C. (*kneeling by her aunt*). So it seems! What have you done to poor, dear, auntie? You horrid, unkind boy!

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F. Oh, Cis, *do* be nice! Miss Armitage has read a note I sent you, and——

C. You shouldn't send me notes! You know I don't want them! I *can't* forgive you for upsetting auntie like this!

(F. *exit furious, L.*)

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*The garden at the Cottage. Exit R. Afternoon of same day.* LADY FERGUSON *sitting L. by small table—papers on it.* (F. *enters R.*)

F. Hallo, Anna—I thought I should find you here—how d'ye do?

LADY F. Splendid, thanks. I can't say you look the same! I suppose you're stopping at your cousin's—still fluttering round the cruel Cicely?

LADY F. Oh, no, Freddy! Don't talk nonsense!

F. (*sitting by* LADY F.). She doesn't *mean* to be cruel, I'm sure——

LADY F. Oh, yes, she does, Freddy—and you should be cruel in return! For instance, you should have gone straight home after landing her here on Tuesday! But you've *no* resources—none whatever! What is it now?

F. (*gloomily*). It's not much good talking—but old Armitage said things *must* be settled by the time he came back. I daresay they will—but not the way he and *I* want!

LADY F. (*reflectively*). Cis is very fond of you, Freddy——

F. Oh, Anna, don't make fun to-day—I can't stand it! (*walks R.*) There's a regular row on at her aunt's—Cis is mad with me, though I was only standing up for her! She asked me to lunch to-morrow, when the old lady is out, but I can't go now!

LADY F. Of *course* you can go, Freddy! Making up a quarrel gives one such a splendid chance! But what is it about?

F. Well, that horrid old aunt opened a letter of mine to Cis, and *then* she pokes into her account book—frightful impertinence *I* call it—and comes to the conclusion that *I* have been extorting money out of Cicely!

LADY F. Oh, no, Freddy! Don't talk nonsense! Miss Armitage, after all, isn't a lunatic, and her brother *must* have told her who you were!

F. Of course I'll go to lunch if you think it's any good (*looking R.*). By Jove! There's Aunt Cecilia's maid coming!

LADY F. Is she? (*Thinks.*) Stop her, Freddy—tell her I want to see her; you go and have a chat with my husband. (F. *exit R.*)

J. I've brought a note, my lady, from Miss Cicely (*gives letter*).

LADY F. (*reads it*). I won't write, but please tell her I shall be delighted to come, but she mustn't wait lunch for me.

J. Yes, my lady. Could you take Miss Cicely away with you, my lady? She's upsetting my mistress something dreadful; though all the time she's as sweet as sugar!

LADY F. I can quite imagine it, Janet. Miss Armitage is worrying about this Mr. Foster, isn't she?

J. Yes, my lady. It's natural, seeing how Mr. Armitage spoke about Miss Cicely's flirtations.

LADY F. I believe I can stop all this trouble. Will you help me?

J. Oh, please don't bring *me* into it, my lady!

LADY F. I won't bring you into anything, Janet; don't be frightened.

J. My mistress *was* going shopping to-morrow, my lady—but *now* she's going to Victoria to meet the boat train! I think it's very venturesome, my lady, but if Mr. Armitage is there she wants to bring him straight back with her. She says she's made shocking discoveries, my lady!

LADY F. Good gracious! Well, all the better if he *does* come, Janet. Now, you must let me into the house to-morrow quietly, lend me a cloak and bonnet of Miss Cecilia's, and introduce me to Miss Cicely as her sister!

J. Miss Cecilia's sister, my lady! She hasn't one!

LADY F. Never mind, Janet—she shall have one to-morrow.

J. I don't understand, my lady—but I'll do it!

LADY F. That's right. Don't say a word about it, but give my message to Miss Cicely. Good afternoon.

J. Good afternoon, my lady. (J. *Exit R.*)

LADY F. Poor Janet! (*Exit R.*)

CURTAIN.

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SCENE IV.—MISS ARMITAGE'S *drawing-room. The next day—after lunch*—CICELY *at the window.*

C. I can't *think* why Anna doesn't come!

C. I can't *think* why Anna doesn't come! I should have thought she would be *certain* to, after my *second* letter! (*Enter* FREDDY *L.*)

F. There's no sign of Anna anywhere, Cis—but what does it matter?

C. (*sitting L.*). Oh, I wanted to see her—that's all. (F. *sits on sofa too.*) But, Freddy, what happened yesterday? It couldn't have been only that note. Auntie wouldn't explain—can't you?

F. Well, it's jolly awkward. The fact is she came across something in your account book. My initials were down two or three times, with sums of money against them, and—oh, hang it all, Cis! don't look like that!

C. (*walking R.*). Freddy! Does Aunt Cecilia think—— Why, I've never given you a thing in my life!

F. (*standing L.*). No, I know that!

C. *Your* initials! What are they? Frederick—Allen—Foster, isn't that it? F—A—F. Oh! (*sitting R.*) Freddy, you duffer! Why, of course! Don't you know what F—A—F stands for? (*Laughing.*)

F. No, I don't.

C. Oh, it really *is* funny! Poor Aunt Cecilia! (*Still laughing.*)

F. (*coming to* C.). Cis, I don't care what F—A—F means—if it's only a joke, you can fix it up with Miss Armitage. I want to tell you I'm going home to-morrow, and then abroad.

C. Home to-morrow! Abroad! Why?

F. I've lazed long enough, Cis; and, after all, I'm not wanted here. Father is young yet, and I can come back after three or four years and settle down, I suppose. I wonder what you'll be doing then? (*Walks L.*)

C. Settling down too, I should think. (*Hides face.*)

F. Cissie! What's the matter? Is she laughing at me? (*Comes to* C., *who is crying.*) Oh, Cis, you're crying! Not because I'm going away, is it? Dearie, just say it is; I won't go. (*Bell rings.*)

C. Freddy! That's auntie! and there's no Anna! Hide!

F. No, not I! Tell me quickly, do you love me?

C. (*starting up*). Please, Freddy, *dear* Freddy, hide! I've promised auntie not to ask you here again. Oh, *do* get under the table!

F. I won't, Cissie! So there! (*Enter* JANET *L.*)

J. Miss Letitia Armitage is here, Miss.

C. *Whoever* is she?

F. Not another aunt?

J. Yes, sir; she's Miss Cecilia's sister. (*Exit L.*)

C. I didn't know she had one! Oh, Freddy, what is going to happen now? (*Enter* LADY FERGUSON *L., dressed as Aunt Letitia.*)

LADY F. Are you my niece Cicely? (*Shakes hands.*) Ah, yes! I see the family nose! But we've not met for very many years!

C. No. I really didn't know I *had* an Aunt Letitia! Do sit down.

LADY F. Thank you. Away from the window, please; my eyes are weak. (F. *offers chair.* LADY F. *puts up lorgnettes.*) Cicely, my dear, who is this? A brother?

C. No—Mr. Foster. (F. *bows.*)

LADY F. Cicely, I had no intention of alluding to this, but I have heard very extraordinary accounts of Mr. Foster!

C. Aunt Letitia!

LADY F. I believe you promised my sister not to see him again!

J. Yes, sir; she's Miss Cecilia's sister.

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F. (kissing her). You darling! It's all right, Miss Armitage—we *are* engaged!

I don't like to think of the consequences when I tell her of this! She is *extremely* delicate!

F. I don't quite see why you should mention me, Miss Armitage—not that I mind, but——

LADY F. *Of course*, you don't see, sir! *Of course*, you don't mind! But, let me tell you, *our* family has been properly brought up! If you and my niece were engaged, it would be different! (*Turns away haughtily.*)

F. Cis——

C. Well, Freddy——

F. Don't you think we might set your aunt's mind at rest? Couldn't you love me just a little?

C. (*after a pause*). I *do* love you, Freddy. *Don't* go away!

F. (*kissing her*). You darling! It's all right, Miss Armitage—we *are* engaged!

C. Yes—it's quite true, Aunt Letitia!

LADY F. (*throwing off disguise*). Then hoorah for Aunt Letitia!

C. AND F. Oh! *Anna!*

F. By—Jove! Anna, you *have* done me a good turn!

C. Oh, Anna, it was a trick to make me—make me——

LADY F. Well! *Someone* had to make you!

C. I am not sure whether *you* made me, or Freddy! (*Takes* F.'s *arm.* MR. *and* MISS A. *enter L.*)

MISS A. *Now*, James! Use your own eyes! This "Freddy" has been here continually since you went. When I think of your wish for Cicely to marry your *dear* friend, I feel very distressed! And—let me finish, James—I find in Cicely's diary numerous entries of F. A. F.—with sums of money against them. I suppose you are aware that these are Mr. Foster's initials?

MR. A. My dear, I feel quite dazed—but surely that's my friend Foster there with Cis?

C. (*running to* Mr. A.). Oh, dad, I *am* glad to see you again! Do let me explain—oh no, *you* tell, Freddy!

F. Well, sir, Cis has said "Yes" to me—we are engaged, but I've never had a chance of telling Miss Armitage that *I* am—your *dear* friend! (MISS A. *startled, sits on sofa by Lady F.*)

MR. A. My dear children, I'm delighted! You understand *now*, Cecilia, don't you? (*Sitting R.*, CIS *and* F. *centre.*)

MISS A. James, my head is in a whirl! F.A.F.'s dance before my eyes!

C. Oh, *I'll* explain—but it *is* so funny! (*Begins to laugh.*)

LADY F. (*jumping up*). Why, of course; *I* see now! F.A.F. stands for the Fresh Air Fund, Miss Armitage! Nothing to do with Freddy! And the money is what Cis has given to it!

MISS A. Dear! Dear! It's Lady Ferguson! (*Shakes hands.*) What is this Fresh Air Fund?

LADY F. Don't you remember? You promised to give me something towards it! It's a fund for giving the poor children of our great towns a day in the country! And, you see, F.A.F. is short for Fresh Air Fund!

MISS A. Well, very nice indeed. Why didn't someone tell me before?

C. (*laughing*). Ah, auntie, no one ever had a chance! But Anna's so wonderfully clever, she has put everything quite straight.

Amateur theatricals are very popular, and nothing could be better for the purposes of budding Beerbohm Trees and embryo Ellen Terrys than this little charade.

It is very amusing and easy to act, and moreover it arouses interest in the Fresh Air Fund amongst the audience.

On His Page (p. 384), the Editor makes an interesting suggestion for those performing this little piece.

MISS A. *Now*, James! Use your own eyes!

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A SAD AWAKENING

When Mrs. Bee has roused me not, but left
me to my fate,
I've often slept an hour too long, and gone
to business late;
The Head said I must come to time, on this
he would insist,
And if this warning I ignored, next time
I'd be dismiss'd.

To lose my situation I of course could not
afford;
I knew, should I offend again, the Head
would keep his word;
And so a loud alarum-clock I bought for
half-a-crown;
The shopman said 'twould rouse the deaf
from bed of softest down.

With this to rouse me in the morn I could
no more be late;
When I retired I set the clock upon the
stroke of eight;
And then, my mind relieved from fears,
into my bed I crept;
Sweet sleep my eyelids gently closed, and
peacefully I slept.

How long I slept I cannot tell, when
suddenly there rang
The gong of my alarum-clock, and out of
bed I sprang;
I thought the morning rather dark and
very late the sun,
Until I found, to my disgust, 'twas only
half-past one.

I gladly went to sleep again, but not for
very long,
For that detested clock I bought seemed
gone completely wrong;
It woke me up at two o'clock, at half-past
three, and four—
The moment I was fast asleep, it started
off once more.

I vowed as soon as morning came the
wretched thing I'd smash,
Then slept again until my dreams were
banished like a flash;
It was the voice of Mrs. Bee that roused
me with a shock:
"I called you quite an hour ago: it's nearly
nine o'clock!"

Herbert J. Brandon.

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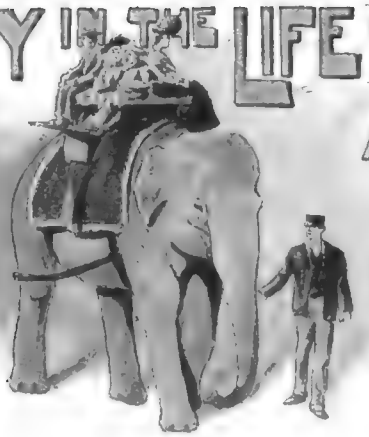
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A KEEPER AT THE ZOO



A Full Account of His Unique Existence and Extraordinary Duties.

By A. E. Johnson.

There are over one hundred of us, and a queer job it is that we perform. Most readers of The Royal have probably at one time or another kept pets, and know something of the mingled joys and cares which the maintenance of captive creatures involves; but few can have had experience so varied as falls daily to the lot of a keeper at the Zoological Gardens, or have been upon intimate terms with such odd and occasionally formidable charges. For some of us have to groom and keep in hand "my lord the elephant," while others tend the timid, fat-tailed desert mouse; this man has charge of hairy spiders and rare moths, the while his fellow, with cracking whip, drives the unwieldy hippopotamus to and from her tank.

There is much of interest and variety in the daily round of a keeper at the Zoo, especially if he has the luck to be placed in charge of some intelligent animal, with which it is possible to establish personal relations.

At the same time, it must be owned that there is also much monotony in his day's work. At morning and evening he is busy, but during the greater part of the day he has to be on duty with very little that is definite to do. In the summer his hours are long and tiring, and though in winter his working day is a short one, the scant attendance of visitors intensifies the monotony which in the warm months is relieved by a constant stream of sightseers.

The keeper's duties commence early. At six o'clock in the morning he presents himself at the Gardens, and repairs at once to the house or cages to which he is attached. The first business is that of cleaning out the domicile of his charge, a task which varies according to the nature of the latter. In the case of small animals, or those which are docile, and can be handled without fear, the cleaning process is simple, and no more difficult or arduous than the sweeping of a rabbit-hutch or birdcage.

The big beasts, naturally, require more attention, and, when the captive is of a truculent or dangerous disposition, the work is attended by no small difficulty. By threats and wiles the inmates of the cage must be driven or coaxed from one compartment to another, and securely shut off while the keeper goes about his business. For this purpose the sliding doors and partitions necessary to make this isolation possible are worked (as observant visitors will have noticed in many of the houses) by means of levers, windlasses, and the like from outside the monsters' dens.

There are some animals of uncertain temper, into whose presence it is never safe to venture. Certain species seem to be wholly incapable of domestication, and never lose their natural ferocity. The wild cattle, for instance, have to be handled with extreme caution, while the desert asses, and zebras, are always inclined to show their savage and vindictive spirit by biting and kicking.

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There are other animals, too, which it would mean not only danger, but instant death, to confront. Such was Jim, the old rhinoceros, who died not long ago, after forty years of residence in the Zoo.

One would have thought that he would have learnt toleration at least towards his keeper; but most certainly he would have charged and trampled under foot any intruder rash enough to trespass in his lair.

The keeper having swept and garnished the cage under his care, the time for the morning meal arrives. The hours of feeding, of course, vary with the animal, but the majority of the creatures, it may be remarked, enjoy two meals a day—first thing in the morning and last thing at night.

Needless to say, the task of feeding all these hungry mouths is a gigantic and expensive one. For the benefit of the flesh-eaters, there is a slaughter-house among the service-buildings of the Gardens, where daily an aged "knacker" and some half dozen goats are sacrificed to satisfy the rapacious maws of the lions, tigers, leopards, and smaller carnivora.

The bulk of the animals, however, are vegetable and fruit eaters, and to meet the wants of these a large storehouse exists. Here the keepers draw their rations of hay, best clover (for valuable animals must be indulged), carrots and other roots, green vegetables, milk, bread, grain, and bran; besides eggs and fruit of various kinds, and the straw which is used for bedding.

It costs something like £4000 a year to feed the Zoo—a sum which seems tremendous to those who have not the keeper's knowledge of the extent of the different inmates' appetites.

Remember that an elephant gets through 90lb. of hay and 40lb. of oats, beans, rice, and biscuits per day, and the hippopotamus half-a-hundredweight each of hay and a mash of bran and mangel-wurzels!

Consider also for a few moments the following items (in round figures) from the annual food bill:

Horse and goat flesh	100 tons
Fish	40,000lb.
Vegetables (greens, etc.)	200 cwt.
Other vegetables (roots, cre s, etc.)	10,000 bunches
Bread	6000 quarters
Grain, bran, etc.	600 quarters
Milk	4500 quarts
Eggs	30,000
Fruit	3000lb. and 150 bushels
Clover, hay, and straw	500 loads

There are special articles of diet, besides, which have to be provided for certain animals at somewhat extravagant prices. The herons and cormorants, for instance, as well as the diving birds whose meal-time performance in the glass tank is such a popular spectacle, require live fishes, which have to be specially caught, while the pythons and other big snakes demand, in some cases, live rabbits or ducks by the half dozen or so at a time.

The keeper's duties in the matter of feeding are not by any means confined to the

There are some animals of uncertain temper, into whose presence it is never safe to venture.

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Pelicans are ready to accept as a dainty anything . . . from a brass farthing to a bunch of keys!

mere drawing of rations. Many animals are delicate and fastidious eaters—*gourmets* perhaps, but certainly not *gourmands*—and their food has to be specially prepared to tempt their fancy. Sometimes it even has to be disguised.

Take the apteryx, or kiwi, for example, that strange, wingless bird from New Zealand. In its natural state the kiwi, which is nocturnal in habits, finds its food by probing the soft earth with its long bill, at the tip of which are its nostrils, and smelling out the worms, so to speak. In the Zoo the keeper, during summer time, digs worms and buries them in a pan of earth for his eccentric charge to root out in orthodox fashion. But in winter the ground is hard, and worms are not to be had. The kiwi, nevertheless, must be fed, and the keeper, therefore, has to resort to the ingenious expedient of cutting raw steak into long, worm-like filaments, which the fastidious bird, little realising the trick which has been played upon it, swallows with as much gusto as it displays over a real worm.

There is the difficult task, too, of coaxing recalcitrant animals which incline (as some will in captivity) to self-starvation, into a more rational frame of mind—the coaxing sometimes taking the extreme form of forcible injection of food into their unwilling gullets! And there is the equally difficult task of accustoming animals, whose *natural* food cannot be supplied, to a new and foreign diet.

It is interesting indeed to notice the large number of creatures in the Zoo which thrive well upon food which, in a wild state, they can never have the opportunity of tasting. The giraffes, for instance, do well on clover, though their natural food is the fresh foliage of such trees as the acacia. The Polar bear seems to find horse fat an excellent substitute for blubber, while the ant-eaters readily forego the delights of raw (and live) ants for a savoury mess of minced meat, eggs, and bread and milk.

Not all the denizens of the Zoo are difficult to please in the matter of food. The wild boars, as might be expected, gobble up with

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relish a mess which, in appearance at least, is unsavoury to a degree; the elephants, as everyone knows, will push down their throats practically anything that their trunks can lay hold of—paper bags included; while the ostriches and pelicans are ready to accept as a dainty anything and everything from a brass farthing to a bunch of keys!

And while attending to the inner wants of his charges, the keeper must not forget to see that they have within reach a proper supply of salt. Almost all animals—both beasts and birds—require salt to keep them in health. This in captivity is provided usually in the form of lumps of rock salt, placed in a corner of the yard or cage. Cattle and deer attend to their own needs by frequent licking of the welcome lump, but in the case of birds, water has to be poured over the salt at intervals. The liquid, on evaporation, leaves tiny crystals of salt upon the floor, and these the birds are able to pick up with their beaks.

The sight-seeing crowd needs tactful handling. No small demand is made upon the keeper's patience by the endless queries which are put to him by inquiring visitors. A sense of humour will help him through these trials, though, indeed, it needs a temper of angelic evenness to withstand unruffled the persistent fire of foolish and inane questions.

The amazing stupidity of the average inquirer would astonish even a cynic; and the utter lack of the most ordinary observation leads one to the conclusion that nine persons out of every ten must go through life with their eyes practically shut. The ignorance shown of the most elementary facts of natural history is no less remarkable than lamentable.

Bank holidays are wearing days for the keeper. The numbers that visit the Zoo on these occasions are almost incredible. The Gardens literally swarm with sightseers, and through every house a continuous stream passes from morning till night, without a check. Popular places such as the lions' house, the sea lions' pond, or the monkey house, are so congested that progress is almost impossible.

On these days the regular keepers are usually reinforced by the gardeners and labourers employed about the place, but even with this additional assistance they have their hands more than full. Not only are they bombarded with questions that would drive a lightning calculator silly, but they have to keep a sharp look-out for mischievous folk who hold it a supreme jest to tease the fretful captive, or ply the willing gormandiser with food which, if not actually inimical to its health, will in all probability cause discomfort and sickness.

Most of the mistaken efforts in feeding, however, are the result of misdirected kindness, and very ludicrous is the mild astonishment which greets the refusal of the sea lions to eat biscuits, or the indifference of tigers to the seductive bun.

During the summer, when the Gardens are at their brightest, visitors many and frequent, and the animals able to enjoy the comparative freedom of the open-air inclosures, the long hours of the keeper's leisure—for he remains on duty till past sundown—are not so dull. But in winter there is little or nothing to distract him, and, though the short days release him early, time hangs heavy on his hands. There are days in bad weather when not a single visitor passes the turnstiles!

Mild astonishment . . . greets . . . the indifference of tigers to the seductive bun.

Occasionally the monotony is relieved by the excitement which attends a new arrival. Animals reach the Zoo in all kinds of ways. Pets which are presented by their fond owners generally arrive under private care, and are handed over to the Superintendent at his office.

Animals out of the common run require special methods of transport, and in the case of large specimens their safe

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Escapes are contingencies which the keeper has sometimes to meet.

delivery entails a lot of trouble and care. Those which are domesticated, as is the case, for instance, with elephants or camels, can be brought through the streets on foot, but dangerous or untamed beasts require strong bars and bolts.

Wild animals of the largest species, however, seldom reach a menagerie in full-grown condition. A captive rhinoceros, hippopotamus, or giraffe has usually been trapped when young, and makes his first bow to the public as a little fellow, whose transport has not presented the difficulties which would attend the shifting of him after he has grown to the two or three tons of the adult state.

The treatment of new arrivals varies in different cases. Some are kept for a while in seclusion, in order to recover from the effects of a long journey; others are loosed at once into the cage or inclosure prepared for them. Much care has to be exercised when certain animals are being turned out, for there is no little risk of their receiving injury in the process.

Often it happens—in the case of deer, antelopes, and cattle especially—that the poor brutes are so scared by their confinement and the jolting they have received in transport, that they dash wildly out of the traveling box, and in a blind frenzy hurl themselves headlong against any obstacle—brick wall, paling, or wire netting—which stands in their way. Valuable specimens have sometimes killed themselves in this luckless manner, and been lost in the very hour of what seemed to be their safe arrival.

Rare and valuable animals are occasionally imported under the special supervision of an official of the Society sent out to take charge of them. A few years ago the Assistant Superintendent traveled out to Aden in order to receive and bring home from Abyssinia a magnificent pair of Grévy's zebras, presented to Queen Victoria by the Emperor Menelik, and only a couple of months since the same gentleman journeyed to Calcutta, in order to convey home the large collection of wild beasts which the Prince of Wales has accumulated during his Indian tour, just as the King did in similar circumstances years ago.

Fights and escapes are contingencies which the keeper has sometimes to meet,—the latter, however, but rarely, and the former not often. A serious fight, indeed, occurs

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about as seldom as an escape. Quarrels occasionally develop into rows, but the mutual damage inflicted is never much before the forcible persuasion of a broom or pole restores peace and order. Should the combatants become so far infuriated with each other as to ignore the keeper's warnings, the hose-pipe can be relied upon, almost infallibly, to quench the most pugnacious spirit.

Escapes are few and far between, and mostly confined to small and harmless creatures, such as the fox which not long ago slipped out and lived comfortably for days in an impromptu lair behind the Reptile House before being discovered and recaptured. It is on record that years ago a hippopotamus—the first ever kept in the Zoo—burst out of bounds, and Frank Buckland, in one of his books, tells the story of a bear which managed to climb out of the bear-pit, and was ignominiously driven back at the point of the broom, but for a long time past no truant worthy of note has succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the keepers. The big and dangerous animals are too carefully guarded to allow of their escape, except by some extraordinary accident.

Nevertheless, the Superintendent's office contains a notable battery of sporting firearms, in case of emergency. Were such a catastrophe to happen as the escape of any dangerous inmate of the Zoo, which might exhibit a tendency to resent recapture by running amok, it is safe to assert that a rifle bullet would speedily bring it to an untimely end.

The care of the sick must, of course, be included in the duties of the keeper. Ailing animals are promptly placed under the "doctor's" orders, the latter being either the Superintendent or the veterinary surgeon attached to the Gardens. Sometimes the patient is treated in its own domicile, but, where the cage is shared by other inmates, it is usually removed and nursed in the keeper's room.

Operations have to be performed now and then, and it may readily be imagined that cutting the claws of a tiger or filing the tusks of a hippopotamus are jobs which require not a little preparation if they are to be successfully performed. Animals that die are sent to the prosectorium, where a post-mortem examination into the causes of death is held, the skin being afterwards—if the specimen is a valuable one—stuffed, and the skeleton set up.

Of the keeper's daily round, which this article sets out to describe, very little more remains to be said. When evening comes he makes his final preparations for the night. In most cases the evening meal is served out, and the cage, den, or stall once more having been swept out and tidied, the litter of straw for bedding is shaken down. The hour of sunset having arrived, and with it the closing of the Gardens, the keeper gives a final look to his charge, and, having made sure that all is in order, locks the door of the house, and is ready to go home.

The Gardens, however, are not deserted at night. Not only does the Superintendent reside within their precincts, but there are also lodges in which dwell the head keeper and some of the under keepers who are permanently on duty. Moreover, the furnaces beneath the temperate and tropical houses require constant stoking, and throughout the night two firemen patrol the walks, proceeding on their rounds from house to house.

These men, in their nightly comings and goings, see curious sights and scenes. On the warm summer evenings the nocturnal creatures that lie hidden and asleep all day creep forth to feed, and in the pale light of the moon gambol merrily, while their custodians snugly snore in bed.

The wonderful Zoo never sleeps.

THE SUMMER GIRL'S REVERIE.

She drew a necklace from her trunk.
"Ah, me! this present takes me back
To all those happy hours I spent
With darling George! . . . or was it
Jack?

"And this!" She gently touched a ring.
"I got it by the silver sea,
When Tom—no! it was Fred, I think . . .
Or Archibald—proposed to me."

She raised a bracelet. "Here Dick wrote
The month, September, and the scene
Where first we met . . . Why, what's
this?—'June'?
Well, Cyril, then, it must have been.

"To which of them am I engaged?"
The doubtful point she pondered well.
"Alas!" she sighed, in deep regret,
"My note-book's lost; I cannot tell!"

LESLIE THOMAS.

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Real Life Romances.

Readers are Asked to Submit Descriptions of Incidents which They have Witnessed or Heard of Suitable for Insertion in these Pages. Contributions, which are Liberally Paid for on Acceptance, should be Five Hundred Words in Length.

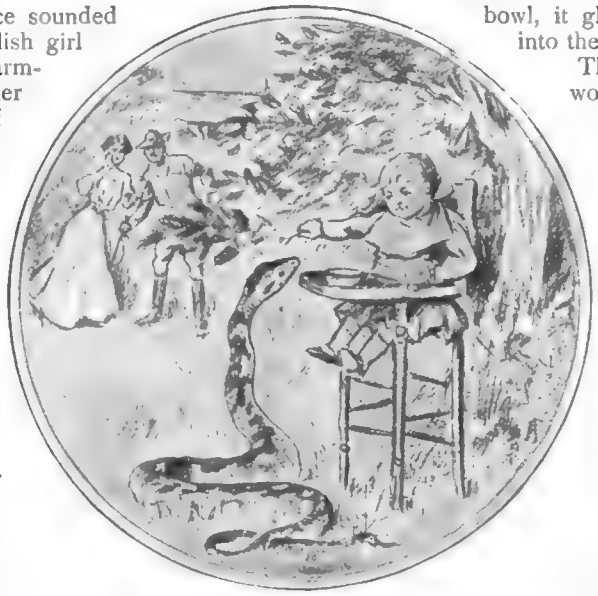
Baby's Friend.

A SOUTH AFRICAN INCIDENT.

THE scene of this story is a pretty farmhouse in Natal, surrounded with trees and a neat garden. A brilliant sun was rising over a near-lying kopje, whilst beneath one of the trees a small child beat a tattoo with its chubby fists on a crescent table attached to the high chair in which it was imprisoned.

Presently a voice sounded and a pretty English girl tripped from the farmhouse, bearing in her hands a basin of bread and milk. The baby gurgled joyfully, and, with a parting kiss, the mother returned to the house.

For some minutes there was a stillness. Then voices sounded from the house, and the girl came out leaning on her husband's arm. Together they advanced to where, through the foliage, the baby's chair was faintly visible.



To their horror the child tapped her spoon upon the reptile's head.

Suddenly the girl clutched tightly at her husband's arm. Her face had taken a deadly whiteness, and she pointed rigidly at the baby.

Reared up before the tiny child was a huge snake, peacefully lapping the milk from the basin.

The man felt a sudden inclination to hurl himself at the reptile. But such action, the voice of caution warned him, would be fatal, if not to him, to his baby girl.

Fearing to move, lest in doing so they should cause the snake to turn upon their child, the parents gazed helplessly on the scene.

"Go 'way, naughty snake," they heard the baby cry, and to their horror the child tapped her spoon upon the reptile's head.

Two hearts stood still.

"Gweedy snake, you eat all baby's bwekfus." And again the baby tapped the snake playfully with the spoon.

Still the reptile paid no heed, until, having consumed the contents of the bowl, it glided silently away into the bush.

Then a half hysterical woman snatched the infant to her arms, whilst a still trembling man beat the reptile dead with a stick.

"Baby's quite safe now, Daddy's killed the horrid snake," cried the mother as her husband showed them the dead reptile.

A piteous wail rose from the baby.

"Oh, oh!" she sobbed. "'Oo has killed de dear snake. De poor snake has tum often an' often to bwekfus wiv Babs."

The mother turned sick with horror on hearing this dreadful statement. She pictured the daily encounters between the snake and her little girl, and shuddered to think what might have happened had the child in any way irritated the reptile.

The whole incident was very easy to explain.

Snakes are, as is well known, very partial to milk, and this particular one, having discovered that the baby was provided with bread and milk at a certain hour, had got into the habit of coming every day at the same time to "bwekfus wiv Babs."

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A Swim for a Wife.

THE ROMANCE OF A GERMAN OFFICER.

TO be married by accident one would naturally consider the most appalling misfortune that could happen to a man. But that is looking at it in one light only. From another point of view—that of Lieutenant Wagner, a young officer of the Hamburg-American Line, it appears quite the reverse of a disaster.

Lieutenant Wagner, to begin with, stood on board the liner *Axenfels* content with all the world.

Such a description of a man in the early stages of a long sea voyage, for the *Axenfels* was bound from Rio de Janeiro to Hamburg, is not conventional. But in this case there were circumstances. And the said circumstances centred themselves in the charming, beautiful daughter of a wealthy Brazilian mine-owner, who, with her father, was among the passengers.

The few first hot days of the voyage, when everyone panted and wished the sun would shine in other places where it would be more appreciated, passed like a day-dream to Lieutenant Wagner.

He was in love. He felt it from the first moment that he had set eyes on the beautiful Brazilian. But there was her father. . . . So the lieutenant reckoned the length of his happiness by the number of days that it would take the boat to accomplish the voyage.

Still, the Fates had decreed a more delightful destiny for Lieutenant Wagner.

The sun no longer scorched the vessel's decks. Dark clouds, driven by a fierce wind, sped swiftly, interminably, overhead. The *Axenfels* dipped her prow deeply in the waves. Great seas heaved round her, at times sweeping the decks.

Yet Lieutenant Wagner was in nowise concerned. He stood beside the beautiful Brazilian girl, watching the storm, and they laughed together as a larger wave than usual dashed its heavy spray over her long waterproof.

Suddenly a cry rang out: "Man overboard!" The lieutenant picked himself up from a bulkhead, whither he had been dashed by an unexpectedly large wave descending on the ship.

Where was the girl? Again the words "Man overboard!" rang in his ears. He rushed to the side, peering eagerly into the heaving waters.

Heavens, it was she!

Not a second did the lieutenant lose.

Dragging off his heavy sea-boots, he plunged into the storm-tossed sea, regardless of the mounting waves and the icy chill of the water.

He knew that the *Axenfels* was being brought to. Already the engines had been reversed, but even then what chance had he of saving the girl he loved from those angry billows?

The girl was in his arms. But how heavily she lay! Could he support her?

His head rose from the water. He swam as he had never swum in his life. The girl was in his arms. But how heavily she lay! Could he support her? His arms ached. The salt water choked him. He was sinking.

The prow of a boat rose blurred before his eyes. He was dimly conscious that the girl was safe. Then he remembered that he, too, was still living.

Some weeks later the Hamburg papers announced that the Senate had decided to award the lieutenant their life-saving medal. And still later—that the rich Brazilian had added to his other gifts of gratitude by bestowing his daughter's hand on the gallant officer.

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Trapped by the Tide.

A HOLIDAY ADVENTURE.

EVERY year provides the newspaper columns with its Alpine accidents, every frost its "drowning fatalities," and every season its own particular mishaps.

And all these mainly to those on pleasure bent, which shows that there is vastly more danger in pleasure-making than in attending to one's daily work.

And so it came about last Eastertide that three Cambridge undergraduates very nearly lost their lives as the termination of a walk along the cliff-lined shores of Sandown.

Approaching dusk, one evening, found them standing at the base of a towering prominence. In front of them, and to right and left, the gently rolling tide lapped the cliff's foot. Escape by the shores appeared well-nigh impossible. Only the crumbly height afforded a loophole of escape.

Mindful of the anxiety a prolonged absence would naturally cause their friends, they determined to face the cliff.

Fifty feet up their difficulties assumed proportions far more serious than they had imagined whilst standing at the base. Still, step by step, with infinite care, for the chalk cliff crumbled beneath them, another ten feet were overcome. Higher it now proved impossible to go.

The cliff, sombre in the failing light, projected over their heads. To retreat by the way they had come appeared as perilous as to continue.

They decided to descend. Suddenly, one of the little party, attempting to slide down, disappeared over an unnoticed drop down to the rocks below.

Clinging to their slender foothold, the remaining two, horrified at their companion's seemingly certain end, debated what they should do. They dared not move. Two hundred feet and more above them they knew was situated a Marconi station, but who there would dream of their predicament?

An hour went by. They were hungry, but more thirsty. At last one of them became unconscious. The other dragged him closer, supporting his senseless friend with difficulty. Then he shouted.

The awkwardness of his position was brought home to him very forcibly as he braced himself against the cliff and held his insensible friend, to prevent his falling headlong.

What possibility was there of anyone hearing his cries? And what of the unfortunate man who had fallen? Was he still alive, or lying a corpse on the sands below?

He shouted again.

Suddenly two loud "Hullo's" fell on his ears.

He called again, and again came the response.

Soon on the cliffs overhead a small crowd of soldiers from the neighbouring fort, and coastguards with ropes, had collected, and with great difficulty the two undergraduates were drawn safely to the summit.

Suddenly, one of the little party . . . disappeared over an unnoticed drop down to the rocks below.

Then they told the story of the terrible accident that had befallen their companion. Other coastguards descended. And there on a rock, with his shoulders above the rolling tide, they found the third, bleeding, but conscious.

How the coastguards improvised a stretcher, and how they contrived to get the wounded man to the summit, would form almost another tale in itself. Still more so would the marvelous escape of the undergraduate, who suffered no further hurt than a number of bruises and a severe shaking.

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The Man Behind the Curtain.

THE ROMANCE OF A CAPTAIN'S WIFE.

THE place was Brecon, the month May, and the time 7.30 p.m.

Captain Kitchen, Adjutant to the Breconshire Volunteers, was about to ride forth on his motor-cycle to a neighbouring town, and his young wife stood by the gate to see him start.

"Good-bye, my dear," said he, as he mounted. "I shan't be long, probably, but if I *am* late, don't sit up for me."

With sundry loud, explosive reports, he was gone, and Mrs. Kitchen, slowly strolling up the path to the house, heard the throb, throb of the machine die away in the distance. She went straight into the study where the two usually sat after dinner. The curtains were drawn across the French windows that opened upon the lawn, the lamp was lighted, and a bright little fire glowed in the grate.

Seating herself, with her feet upon the fender, she set diligently to work upon baby's new frock that was very near its completion, and so absorbed was she in her pleasant task that an hour slipped by in a stillness broken only by the monotonous click of her needle, or the occasional dropping of a cinder in the grate.

Suddenly her senses were all on the alert. There was a slight noise in the room. She was certain of it.

What if someone had slipped in during the two or three minutes that she was in the garden, or, more likely, whilst she and her husband were at dinner?

She was a woman of quick perception, quick resolve, and with the steady nerve of healthy youth. Laying down her work with a natural sigh of weariness, she rose, and quietly left the apartment without casting even a glance around.

Running upstairs, she seized one of her husband's revolvers and in another moment re-entered the study, with a beating heart it must be confessed, and at once made for the curtained window behind Captain Kitchen's writing table. Without hesitation she pulled the curtains aside, and out stepped a man!

Mrs. Kitchen was not a volunteer's wife for nothing. Covering him with her weapon, she said:

"Move, and I'll shoot you!"

Back slunk the man, cowed by this unflinching demeanour.

"Pull up the blinds," directed the dauntless young lady. He obeyed.

"Open the window."

This, too, was done. With true military precision the discomfited burglar was marched across the lawn and on to the road, with the merciless weapon still pointed at his nervous back. As he disappeared into the starry dusk of the spring evening, plucky Mrs. Kitchen heaved a deep sigh of relief.

Covering him with her weapon, she said: "Move, and I'll shoot you!"

"Thank Heaven that he went so quietly," breathed she. "And to think that the revolver was not loaded!"

She went calmly indoors, as if nothing uncommon had occurred, resumed her sewing, and at ten o'clock dismissed her cook and nurse to bed, sitting up alone for her husband's return.

The moment she heard his step she flew to meet him.

"Oh! I am glad you are back. I have been longing to talk to somebody. I've had such an adventure!"

So her story was told, and her presence of mind commended, and then Captain Kitchen explained that the lateness of his return was due to a breakdown of his machine.

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An Interview By Appointment

The Story of a Mistake.

By Victor L. Whitechurch.

The Bishop of Frattenbury was seated in his study at the Palace, with his usual enormous pile of correspondence on the table before him, and the waste-paper basket overflowing at his side. A pipe was in his mouth firmly gripped between his teeth, for his lordship, although a most uncompromising total abstainer, as all the world knew, was also a prolific smoker. And the strong grit of his character was impressed on the stems of the array of briars that stood in a rack on the table. Nearly every one of them was almost bitten through.

The Bishop was a hardy and vigorous prelate, with a strong bend of obstinacy and determination in his nature, allied to a certain pompous manner which often concealed an underlying current of kindliness, and which sometimes broke to show flashes of dry humour.

So far as possible he read through most of his correspondence, and many of his letters were answered in his own hand. But he kept the gentleman who filled the post of domestic chaplain and secretary pretty busy as well.

He smoked hard as he rapidly took up letter after letter, a smile or a frown occasionally flitting over his face. Very varied was his correspondence. An invitation to open a bazaar, another to take the chair at a missionary meeting, another asking for a subscription to a church restoration—five requests that he would preach at as many different places on the same Sunday; a complaint from an aggrieved parishioner against a ritualistic vicar; a similar epistle from another parish complaining that the incumbent had not ritual enough; a long epistle from a clergyman who wanted his lordship's opinion on an abstruse point of theology, about which few knew and fewer cared; an anonymous contribution denouncing him in no measured language for a speech he had made on the education question, which he put by as a joke to read to his family at luncheon; a missive from an enthusiastic female, wanting to know what he *really* thought about the Athanasian Creed, and so forth, mingled with communications of the highest importance.

At length he lit upon the following letter, written from a London address:

My Lord Bishop,

I am applying for the post of matron to the home for female inebriates at Stangrove, of which your lordship is Visitor and Chairman of the Committee, and I venture to beg for your support. My late husband, the Rev. Jasper Brook, was Vicar of Torrington, in the Diocese of Frattenbury, for upwards of twelve years. The living was a poor one, and as nearly the whole of the slight private means he left was swallowed up in payment for dilapidations, I am obliged to seek some situation. I can give excellent references and testimonials to prove my competency for the post, and, as my husband was a great temperance worker, I may say that I understand much of the special duties required.

May I ask your lordship kindly to grant me an interview?

I remain,
Your lordship's faithful servant,
Mary Brook.

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"Hum," said the Bishop, "I recollect Brook well, though I never met his wife. A good man with an excellent record. I owe it to his memory to see Mrs. Brook."

He rang the bell that stood on his table, and from the next room there came in a tall, thin young clergyman, very precisely dressed, and with a deferential air. He had a note-book in his hand, and the Bishop began to give his orders at once, checking off the letters as he did so.

"I can't open the bazaar at Hilborough—I will take the chair at this meeting—five guineas to Selford church. If Sunday, March 14th, is still free, try to fix two sermons out of these five, but mind you see I can get to both. Acknowledge these—suavely, but without committing me. Tell Mr. Hilton I will write in answer to his letter next week, and don't forget that I do it, either. Couch an answer to this female in the most abstruse theological terms you can think of—orthodox, of course—it will please her, even if she does not understand. About this Mrs. Brook, I will see her; tell her to come—stop, though, I am going to London on Thursday. I must be in the House that afternoon. What time does my train get to Waterloo?"

"At 11.23, my lord."

"Very good. Tell her to meet me in the first-class waiting-room there at that hour. Well, how goes the typewriter, Ross?"

"Capitally, my lord; I can write quite fast with it now, and make very few mistakes."

"That's right, that's right," said the Bishop, who had only recently invested in the machine for his chaplain's secretary.

Mr. Ross went back to his room, and diligently applied himself to the episcopal correspondence. So sure did he fancy himself on the typewriter that he never noticed in writing to Mrs. Brook that he touched a wrong key, and made the appointment for 12.23.

* * * * *

Far away from the peaceful Close of Frattenbury Cathedral, and farther away still from all thought of its episcopal inhabitant, in a suburb in South London two females sat taking their tea in a dingy back parlour.

One of them was a small, angular woman, with sharp, beady black eyes. The other, whose age might have been about fifty, was a commanding-looking personage, with a red face and rather large nose. She appeared to be the visitor, for her bonnet was upon her head, while she held a little bundle of correspondence in her hand.

"Of course, my dear," she was saying, as she sipped her tea, "I should never have dreamt of buying the paper myself. It came into my hands quite by accident, but I thought there could be no harm in reading it."

"Of course not, dear. And have you brought it with you?"

"Here it is."

And she produced a copy of the *Matrimonial Telegraph*.

Miss Sophia Wilson snatched at it eagerly, and began perusing its contents—which were chiefly advertisements.

"How any woman can so degrade herself as to look for a husband in this way I can't think!" she exclaimed, with a snort that ended in a sigh.

"Yes. Isn't it awful! Just what I said to myself when I saw it. But let me find it for you."

And she read the following advertisement:

Gentleman, middle aged, of high social standing and good income, wishes to correspond with a lady of domesticated tastes and refined instincts with a view to matrimony. Age, 30—40. Address, Box 3824.

"Of course, a *gentleman* advertising is a very different thing. It's their sphere to propose, isn't it?" said Mrs. Baxter.

"So they say," replied the spinster viciously.

"Perhaps you haven't found it so, dear," said the widow sweetly, "but, now, *don't* you think the advertisement was—well—of course, I only did it out of curiosity, nothing more, but I *did* answer it."

"What did you say?" inquired Miss Wilson eagerly.

"Well, I told him I was a widow, of course, and I said I had been accustomed to the best society, and that I was of a domestic temperament and very good family—my father was a contractor, you know, dear."

"You told him that?"

"Well, no—it was not necessary."

"How about the age?" snapped Miss Wilson.

"I admitted I was nearly forty, of course."

"Oh!" exclaimed the spinster, with a touch of scorn, "and did you sign it?"

"No—only with my initials, M. B. And I paid a fee to have an answer sent through the paper."

"And did he answer it?"

Mrs. Baxter read the reply triumphantly:

DEAR MADAM,

Your letter has commended itself to me. A personal interview would, however, be more desirable than a lengthened correspondence. I may say,

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though, that I can give you the highest references, and that my position is a very secure one, and my income quite ample. My personal appearance is, I flatter myself, prepossessing, and I do not look my age. My health, also, is excellent. What do you say to a preliminary meeting? If so, I propose that you should be in the first-class waiting-room at Waterloo on Thursday morning next week, and expect me between eleven and twelve. A mutual understanding might then be arrived at. Please answer through the *Matrimonial Telegraph* as before.

"Does he say who he is?"

"No—there is no signature. But he writes in a very gentlemanly way—Sophia, I shall go—and—*you* shall come with me!"

"Lor'!" exclaimed Miss Wilson, quite flustered.

"Yes—you shall. I shan't go without a witness. It may be some trick. Besides, it wouldn't be quite modest to go alone. So I shall tell him I'm bringing a friend. Then, if he doesn't mean business, he won't come."

So it came to pass that at eleven o'clock on the following Thursday morning Mrs. Baxter, gloriously arrayed for the occasion—for she was by no means partial to widow's weeds—and her friend were seated in the waiting-room, trying to look composed, and eyeing the door furtively every time it opened.

Shortly after eleven o'clock, a little, wizened old man came in, took a seat, and gazed curiously round the room. The two women remarked to each other what a funny-looking old man he was, and how he stared. First he looked at one, and then at the other—finally, he went out, his head shaking, and when he got outside the door he said to himself:

"God bless my soul, what an awful-looking couple! I don't know which she was of the two, but I'm very glad I took precautions. I'd rather continue as I am."

And Mrs. Baxter does not know to this day that the "middle-aged gentleman of high social standing and good income," was a retired Excise officer of seventy-two, with a pension of thirty shillings a week, and a superabundance of unconquerable vanity.

After a bit, a new arrival came in, with great dignity and solemnity. He carried his heavy, gold-handled umbrella with as much impressiveness as though it had been his pastoral staff. The silk of his apron shone smoothly over the slight rotundity of his person. His gaiters had never a crease in them, so beautifully did they fit his well-formed legs.

He walked gravely to the top of the room, laid his small bag and umbrella on the table, stood with his back to the fire, and, lifting his pince-nez, gazed round with the air of one who is accustomed to command awe and respect, and with a slight "ahem," that seemed to say: "Good people, behold the embodiment of Church and State!"

There were only three other persons in the room besides the two ladies. One of them was a young curate. He felt uncomfortable as the prelate's gaze fell upon him. He did not know which bishop it was; but he felt, somehow, constrained to rise and lift his hat.

The Bishop acknowledged the homage with a slight bend of the head, and the curate vanished into the freedom of the secular crowd outside.

The Bishop of Frattenbury was punctual as a clock, and expected the same virtue to be exercised by others. It had turned the half hour. If Mrs. Brook was not there already, he was not the man to wait for her. His eye fell on the variegated bonnet of Mrs. Baxter. He noticed that her face reddened, while her eyes half-started out of her head. She was not quite the type of clergyman's widow he had expected to meet, but he determined to speak to her. So he crossed the room.

"I—er—am the Bishop of Frattenbury," he began, in pompous tones, "and I have an appointment with a lady here—may I ask if you are expecting me?"

"I am M.B.," gasped Mrs. Baxter, perfectly overwhelmed; "I—I answered the advertisement—and——"

"Quite so," interrupted the Bishop, wondering slightly why she only gave her initials, and taking a chair in front of her. "I thought it better to arrange an interview here, and save your coming to Frattenbury."

"I'm sure it's very kind of you," mumbled the widow, hopelessly taken aback at the prodigious turn of events—"this is my friend, Miss Wilson."

Miss Wilson, in the depth of her confusion, got up and made a nervous bow. The prelate condescendingly motioned her to be seated, and turned to Mrs. Baxter.

"My time is limited," he said, "so we had better get to business at once. You will—ahem—naturally understand that yours is not the only application, and that the position is one which requires a careful appointment; but on receipt of your letter I felt bound to take you into consideration."

"I thought there could be no harm in writing——" began the widow.

"Of course," interrupted the Bishop, who

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was accustomed in his interviews to take matters into his own hands, and who sometimes gave others very little chance of speaking, "I'm very glad you did write. Now, the establishment you would superintend is a large one."

"That I can quite understand," said Mrs. Baxter, with a nervous giggle that she checked immediately, for she had heard that bishops lived in palaces.

"And there would be a great number of women to look after," went on his lordship.

An imposing array of domestics marched before the widow's mind as she meekly said:

"Yes—of course."

"They would require careful management—even *delicate* management, if I may put it that way, and that is why I require a capable and responsible person. The position is by no means easy to fill."

"I would try my best," said Mrs. Baxter, as the glorious star of her destiny grew brighter and brighter in her eyes.

"I have no doubt of that," said the Bishop, in a kindly voice; "the question is, have you had, do you think, sufficient experience to qualify you for the—ahem—post which I have in view?"

"I was married to my late husband for seventeen years," began the widow with a blush, "and although I never expected to—to——"

"Exactly. It is largely because of that fact that I am taking you into consideration. I knew your husband, and had a great respect for him and his work."

"You knew my husband?" exclaimed the bewildered Mrs. Baxter, thinking that she must have signed her name instead of her initials to the last letter, but wondering much, all the same, at the prelate's intimate knowledge of a defunct and very obscure general dealer.

"My time is limited," he said, "so we had better get to business at once."

"Quite well!" replied his lordship, "and I shall be glad to do what I can for his widow. Er—let me see—if I may ask the question, what is your age?"

"Nearly forty—I stated it in——"

"Your application. I see—I would *rather* it had been a little more. It—er—would be more appropriate, perhaps."

Miss Wilson came to the rescue.

"Don't you think, dear," she said sweetly,

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"that perhaps you have made a slight mistake?"

"Perhaps I have," replied the widow faintly. "I don't seem to remember the exact year in which I was born, and——"

"It is not of paramount importance," said the Bishop benignly, "but I have to mention these things. Well, now, I am very pleased to have seen you, and I will do what I can."

He rose from his seat and offered his hand. Mrs. Baxter grasped it convulsively, and held on to it tightly.

"Oh," she exclaimed, "and you really, *really* mean it?"

"Of course I do," said the Bishop. "I should not have arranged this interview if I hadn't."

"It is—it is—too great an honour—I don't know what to say—I——"

"Pray compose yourself, my dear madam," broke in the Bishop, as he tried to release his hand. "I told you there were other applications, but I shall give yours the preference, and you must live in hopes."

"Oh, I will—I *will*," exclaimed Mrs. Baxter, as she wrung his hand with a final wrench. "When shall I know?"

"I will write to you. I know your address—there. Good-morning, good-morning!" And grasping his bag and umbrella, he hurried out of the waiting-room just a little annoyed at the widow's fervency, which he put down, however, to her anxiety to secure the matronship.

"He knows my address!" said the widow. "Lor', now, I must have put that as well as my name on the letter."

The Bishop of Frattenbury glanced at his watch as he went out. He had a very busy afternoon before him and there was scant time for lunch, so he determined to have a snack then and there. Entering the refreshment-room he called for some sandwiches and a cup of coffee, and sat down at a little table in the corner to eat his hurried meal.

Meanwhile Mrs. Baxter had sunk back in her seat in the waiting-room flushed and overcome, and was talking in awed whispers with her friend.

"The Bishop of Frattenbury!" she gasped.

"He said in his letter his position was a very secure one," murmured Miss Wilson.

"He lives in a palace!"

"A hundred thousand a year!" retorted Miss Wilson, with a vague notion of episcopal incomes.

"What could he see in me?" went on the widow.

"Ah, what indeed, dear?" echoed her friend fervently, with a shake of the head.

"But he *did*," exclaimed Mrs. Baxter indignantly.

"He *did*," echoed the spinster.

"I feel quite overcome—there's a sort of sinking feeling *here*," went on the widow, pressing her hand on the region of her heart.

"Can you wonder, my dear? It's love at first sight—that's what you're suffering from. You'll have to have a little drop of something. You come along with me, my dear. I'll pay for us both to celebrate the event," said the spinster, with a view to favours to come.

"Well," said the widow, "perhaps a biscuit and a *leetle* drop of bottled stout——"

In three minutes' time the horrified Bishop of Frattenbury, as he sat in his corner, was gazing through his glasses at the two ladies with whom he had just been conversing. The ladies in question were standing at the bar, each with a foaming glass of stout in her hand—and one of them was the applicant, so thought the good Bishop, for the matronship of a female inebriates' home!

He gulped down his coffee and went out, unnoticed by either of them, in a highly indignant frame of mind. And the next morning he wrote to Mrs. Brook a very stiff and brief note informing her that her application would not be considered. She, poor thing, had waited for over an hour on the previous day and was at a loss to understand the Bishop's action.

* * * * *

It cannot be said that Mrs. Baxter waited patiently for three weeks. There was a total absence of that virtue. Every day Miss Wilson called to know if she had heard from the Bishop, but letter there was none. At first the spinster buoyed up her hopes, but after a bit she took another turn.

"Suppose he is backing out of it?"

"Oh, *don't* say that, Sophia. I—I couldn't bear it now—after all that has happened."

"He's a man after all, though he *is* a Bishop," said Miss Wilson viciously, "and they're all deceivers."

"But he as good as promised to marry me!"

"I know what *I'd* do if a man did that to me," said the other defiantly.

"What?"

"I'd see him first, and if the interview wasn't satisfactory I'd sue him for breach of promise—there! It's fortunate you had me as a witness, my dear!"

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"Perhaps — perhaps I might write?" suggested Mrs. Baxter.

"Don't you do it. You go and see him, and let me come with you!"

So earnest was the spinster in her repeated advice that at length the widow succumbed, and in a few days they journeyed together to Frattenbury. They made their way through the quiet precincts of the Cathedral Close to the Bishop's Palace.

"Look at it!" exclaimed Mrs. Baxter faintly, as the imposing building burst upon their view.

"Keep up your spirits now, my dear!" said Miss Wilson, as they rang the bell. "Faint heart never —" she added, but was interrupted by the opening of the door by a sombre butler.

Perhaps she was about to say "Faint heart never won fat Bishop!"

"Is the Bishop at home?" asked Mrs. Baxter.

"No, madam, but Mrs. Elliott is."

"Who is Mrs. Elliott?" asked the widow.

"His lordship's wife!" said the man, rather surprised.

"Wife!" shrieked Mrs. Baxter, with a lively recollection of the other applicants. "Oh! did you *ever*, Sophia!"

"We—we will see Mrs. Elliott, if you please," said Miss Wilson, trembling with excitement.

The butler looked a little doubtful, but, asking for their names, ushered them into the drawing-room. A cold and stately lady rose to meet them. One glance at her visitors decided her, and she made no attempt at offering her hand.

"What can I do for you?" she asked.

"We've—we've come to see the Bishop," said Mrs. Baxter.

"Oh, indeed? The Bishop is out at present, but I expect him in every moment. If you have an appointment with him, perhaps you will not mind waiting."

The ladies . . . were standing at the bar, each with a foaming glass of stout in her hand.

"I think, perhaps, you will do as well as the Bishop," snapped Miss Wilson, with a defiant air; "my friend, Mrs. Paxter, here, has something to ask you."

Mrs. Elliott bowed stiffly, and slightly elevated her eyebrows.

"Are you—are you the Bishop of Frattenbury's wife?" blurted out the widow.

"Your inference is quite correct," replied that lady.

"Shameful!" ejaculated Miss Wilson; "and how long have you been married to him, pray?"

"Some thirty years," replied Mrs. Elliott very coldly, "but I cannot understand——"

"Oh! Gracious Heavens! and he as good as asked me to marry him last Thursday three weeks—the—the—the *bigamist!*" shrieked

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Mrs. Baxter, as she threw herself into an arm-chair in a fit of hysterics, and began pounding the floor with her heels and sobbing at the top of her voice.

Mrs. Elliott, with sudden presence of mind, advanced to the bell, and was on the point of ringing it, when the door opened and the Bishop himself came in, gazing in bewilderment as he recognised the two women.

"What is the meaning of all this?" he demanded in stentorian tones.

Then did Miss Wilson stand forth and champion the cause of the widow.

"You wicked man!" she ejaculated, "you've deceived her with your promises. You can't deny it. I was there and heard you. You—you with a wife at home all the time. You've tampered with her affections. *Oh*, you bad wretch! But I'll expose you. I'll tell your clergy what you've done—I'll show you up in the newspapers—a poor, lone widow, too. You—you—you scorpion in gaiters!"

"You wicked man" she ejaculated . . . "You—you—you scorpion in gaiters."

"My good woman," cried the astounded Bishop, "will you allow me to speak? Your friend there has only herself to thank for what has happened. I would have spared her the pain of what I am about to say, but you compel me to be candid. I saw both of you consuming alcoholic liquor at a public bar after our interview. Was it likely that I should consider her a proper person to place in an inebriates' home?"

Which question sounded like a paradox.

"Inebriates' home? *Me!*" shrieked the widow, suddenly recovering and starting to her feet, "whom do you take me for?"

"I presume," said the prelate loftily, as he fixed his pince-nez more firmly on his nose, "I presume that you are Mrs. Brook, the widow of the late Vicar of Torrington, and that you applied for the matronship of the Stangrove Home."

"Oh!" shrieked the spinster, "is *that* your way out of it? I was a witness. You promised to marry her—I heard you!"

"What?" thundered the prelate.

"Didn't you advertise in the *Matrimonial Telegraph*, and didn't I answer it?" exclaimed Mrs. Baxter faintly, "and didn't you write and ask to meet me? And my name's not Brook at all—it's Maria Baxter, and you know it."

Then the Bishop waxed exceeding wrath. He stood with his back to the mantelpiece and spoke.

"You are a couple of excessively foolish women," he said. "That there has been a mistake I do not doubt, nor do I wish to know how it arose. I do not wish to hear another word from either of you. . . . John—show these—ahem—persons out, please."

For, in the midst of his harangue, he had rung the bell, and the butler had appeared.

They left, thoroughly cowed—for the Bishop could be tremendous when he chose. Then his wife, who had been a passive spectator, spoke.

"George!" she exclaimed.

"My dear?"

"George! What *have* you been doing?"

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CAMPING OUT IN A TRAMCAR

When camping out, an elaborate toilet is not necessary, but a mirror is useful in case one wishes to shave.

How to Spend a Very Enjoyable Holiday.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLIVE HOLLAND.

LET me recommend all who have not yet done so to camp out in a tramcar.

A good car similar to those in use before the introduction of electric traction can frequently be obtained for a sum varying from ten to twenty-five pounds according to the demand, size, and condition. Such a one as that illustrated would cost about fifteen pounds.

But even a better one, with garden seats on

Half the delights of an open-air life consist in having meals out of doors. The tramcar should only be used to sleep in, and on wet days.

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top and a flattish roof that can be turned into a roof-garden, can nowadays be had for a like sum.

To adapt it for living purposes will entail a further expenditure varying entirely according to the amount of luxury or comfort which is deemed necessary. But five to ten pounds spent on curtains, carpet, and other fittings would certainly turn the tramcar into a very comfortable if not luxurious habitation.

The sum named would not, of course, include cushions, nor mattresses for sleeping, nor bedding generally, nor fitting up a cupboard for clothes, putting in a stove, or the decoration of the car.

The simplest and most usual way of fitting up a tramcar for occupation is permanently to close the door at one end and divide the interior of the car into two portions—one, devoted to the sleeping accommodation, being from 8ft. to 9ft. in length, and the remainder reserved for a living room.

The sleeping apartment is best constructed by extending the original seats, which are usually from twelve to fifteen inches broad, by another six or eight inches. If the width of the car is not sufficient to permit of a gangway between the beds when this extension has been made, it is not a bad plan to cover in the whole of the space, putting a small division board down the centre, to project about six inches above the level of the berths so as to divide them.

Top berths can easily be constructed above the lower ones as on board ship, and need not be quite so wide. In that case, four people can easily and comfortably sleep in this portion of the car.

Care should be taken to allow ample head room (not less than 3ft.) for the lower beds. The berths should be from 6ft. 6in. to 6ft. 9in. in length, and this will allow, if the sleeping apartment be made 9ft. in length, of sufficient dressing space at the foot of the berths, and between them and the curtain or partition which shuts off the sleeping from the living portion of the car.

The front part of the vehicle can be suitably fitted up by the removal of the old seats, or still better by the turning of them into locker accommodation. The table, for convenience sake, should be of a folding pattern, and of a width which will allow of passage between it and the seats.

In one car recently fitted up for holiday use the original seats were allowed to remain except for a space of 4ft. on either side near the door. On one side in the space thus afforded was constructed an excellent wardrobe, and on the other was installed a most admirable pattern of oil stove capable of cooking a fair-sized joint, a tart, and two sorts of vegetables, all at one time.

By an ingenious arrangement, on the side of the wardrobe furthest away from the door there was a pull-down flap which formed an excellent writing ledge, and as the wardrobe did not occupy quite the whole of the space, one could comfortably sit on the end of the seat and write.

One or two ladies included in a camping party not only add to its charm, but are of the greatest assistance when cooking has to be done.

Overhead racks were fitted for the storage of odds and ends, and a most excellent bookshelf was arranged just under the roof along one side of the car, whilst on the other side a long, straight rack was placed, in which could be kept cricket bats, tennis rackets, balls, golf clubs, fishing-rods, and the etceteras which go to make up holiday amusements.

At the further

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end, just near the partition dividing the sleeping room from the rest of the car, were the hat-racks, ingeniously constructed for the reception of hats which had sufficiently straight and broad brims to pass under the elastic loops of various sizes which were fastened with brass-headed nails to the ceiling.

Clearing away the tea-things. The camp ought always to be close to a water-supply, as much water is necessary for washing purposes, drinking, etc.

Some very desirable "extras" are a few cheap canvas folding deck-chairs, which may be purchased at about three shillings apiece, a few boating cushions, a rug or two, a reliable filter, holding at least a gallon of water, a couple or more "Sparklet" syphons, a small tool chest, with a good supply of the tools most in use, nails, screws, etc., a glue pot and plenty of string.

Another useful thing to have, although it is not absolutely necessary, is a bell-shaped army tent, which can nowadays be purchased second-hand in good condition for about £1. This will be found very handy for use during the day for meals when the weather is too unsettled to risk being caught in a shower whilst at table out of doors, and as a lounge.

It can also be turned at night into supplementary sleeping accommodation if provided with a couple of folding camp bedsteads and a wooden floor made in four sections.

As to stores, a great deal depends on how near one's camp may be to a village or small town where necessaries can be obtained. But our advice to those camping in the heart of the country, away from any town or village of considerable size, is: lay in a good supply at the start.

The transportation, if any considerable distance has to be covered, is best accomplished by taking the car by rail to the nearest intended camping-ground, when a good team of strong horses, which can generally be hired in the neighbourhood, will pull the car to the spot chosen for its more or less permanent home.

The cost of this transport will of course vary according to the distance, and the facility with which the horses can be hired; and in consequence it is difficult to give any correct estimate as to its probable amount.

It is presumed, of course, that either the projecting flanges of the original tramcar wheels have been removed, or new and broader wheels have been substituted for those used when the car was intended to run on lines.

Though we have known cars transported fairly easily to their destination by means of the original wheels, there is little doubt but that it is necessary to substitute others if it is intended to move the car about several times during the season.

In choosing the spot on which to take up one's residence it is well also to select a place within easy distance of a *good and reliable* water supply, as a considerable amount of water will be required both for drinking and washing-up purposes.

It will generally be found possible to get permission to draw into some suitable field, such as that in which the car in the illustrations is shown, without any charge being made, or only a nominal one of, say, half-a-crown to five shillings per week.

Another thing to be remembered is that if the stay is to be at all a long one, it is wise to place boards under the wheels of the car, as they are apt to sink down into the soil and give a considerable amount of trouble when the time comes to move on.

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Our Mr Thompson

How a Would-be Jewel-Thief was Foiled.

By Gilbert Stanhope.

From Sir Wm. Vereker, Bart., to Messrs. Malwood & Chiseller, Goldsmiths and Jewellers, Bond Street, London, W.:

Sir William Vereker will be much obliged if Messrs. Malwood & Chiseller will send down to Burwood Hall at their earliest convenience a thoroughly reliable and trustworthy skilled workman to repair a Burmese idol set with rubies of great value.

Mr. Malwood may remember that Sir William showed him the idol on his return from India, when staying at the Grosvenor Hotel. Sir William prefers not to run the risk of its traveling, even under charge of a special messenger, and requests that Messrs. Malwood & Chiseller will send a man in whom they have entire confidence, and will notify him of the exact time of his arrival.

From Messrs. Malwood & Chiseller, to Sir William Vereker, Bart., Burwood Hall, Westfield:

Sir,

We beg to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 25th inst., and in accordance with your request are sending down to-morrow (Friday) our Mr. Thompson. He is a man in whom we have implicit confidence, a thoroughly skilled workman, and quite reliable. He has worked for us for fourteen years, and we are about to take him into partnership. He will bring with him a letter from ourselves, and will travel by the train reaching Westfield at 3.15 p.m.

Trusting that your esteemed order, etc., will be carried out to your complete satisfaction, we remain, etc., etc.

"Sylvia," said Sir William, looking up from his letters; "remind me at lunch time that I've got to be in at three o'clock. The jewelers are going to send down a (referring to the letter) a Mr. Thompson to mend that idol."

"Very well, uncle," said Sylvia.

She was not his niece really, only his ward; but when she had come to them first, a rich but desolate little orphan, Sir William's wife had encouraged her to give them the titles of relationship. She was dead now, and Sylvia had lived alone with the irascible old gentleman until a week ago, when he had suddenly provided her with an elderly companion.

Breakfast over, Sir William called her into his study and closed the door.

"I have just heard, Sylvia, that Captain Westnutt is here, staying with his uncle."

A rush of colour came into the girl's rather pale face, and a happy light danced in her eyes.

His gaze did not soften when it rested on the pretty face grown so suddenly radiant. "I tell you this in order to warn you. He will not have the impertinence to come here, I fancy, after what I have written to him. But you are not to go outside the grounds, remember, unless Mrs. Barden is with you."

"But, uncle——"

"I want no 'buts,' Sylvia. I expect to be obeyed."

"You shall be obeyed, uncle. What I want to say is this. You allowed us to be friends, intimate friends, till lately. Year after year you asked him to stay with us in Scotland; you allowed us to think we might be more than friends, and then suddenly, all because of a speech Bert—Captain Westnutt made, you forbid our speaking to one another."

"But what a speech! Showing beyond the possibility of doubt that his political

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views are rotten and unsound, subversive of all—"

"But I don't want to marry his political views."

"You shall not marry him at all while you are under my guardianship. When you are twenty-five you can do as you like, and with your money he can get into Parliament and bring the whole country to ruin by his confounded schemes. I shall be powerless to prevent it. But till then you cannot marry without my consent, and that you shall not have."

"But, uncle, as you know that when I am twenty-five I shall marry him, what is the use of keeping us apart now?"

"I have given you my commands," said Sir William. "Do you dare to defy me?"

"No," said Sylvia, "I shall obey you for the term that my father's will imposed upon me."

"Then that is enough. I have Mrs. Barden here to go out with you, to see that the puppy does not force himself upon you. It's worry enough to have a strange woman in the house, and to have to be civil to her. What are you smiling at, child? I *was* civil, surely?"

"Well—pretty well! By the way, uncle, isn't to-day the 26th? Surely that was the day of the meeting of the board?"

"Yes, what then? Of course I go there this afternoon."

"But there's the jeweler coming, this Mr. Thompson."

"The deuce there is!" cried Sir William, striking the table with his fist. "What an infernal nuisance! I had forgotten that meeting. I wouldn't miss it for worlds. If I don't get my candidate put into the almshouse in spite of Levett and all his gang, I'll never hold up my head in the county again. We shall have a rare fight for it. I wouldn't be absent for all the world."

"Then perhaps you can put this man off?"

"Certainly I will. I'll send a telegram at once. Now run off, child, I've a hundred and fifty things to attend to this morning."

Before Sir William started to his meeting he brought Sylvia the key of his safe.

"In case that jeweler man should come," he said. "He might have started before my telegram got there. You can unlock it for him, but mind you stay in the room all the time. Don't turn your back on him even for a moment. They say 'their Mr. Thompson is to be trusted,' but I wouldn't trust any of 'em further than I can see 'em."

"Is the idol really so valuable?" asked Mrs. Barden.

"Priceless, madam, priceless. The rubies are about the finest known. Very few people know of its existence, or I should dread burglars every night."

"I should like to see it, dearly!" said Mrs. Barden, clasping her hands in a girlish manner she sometimes affected, which did not go well with her careworn face.

Sir William glared at her as if she had said she would like to steal it. "I must beg you not to speak of it to anyone," he said "And now I must be off. I haven't a minute to spare!"

In his eagerness for the fray, he was starting half-an-hour sooner than necessary. He and Mr. Levett, a neighbouring squire, were rivals and enemies. The otherwise sleepy and quiet little country town was kept awake by their animosity, and their readiness to score off one another on every possible occasion. It was sufficient for one of them to take up a cause for the other to oppose it tooth and nail; Sir William had desired to place an old keeper of his in a vacant almshouse, and Mr. Levett, of course, promptly set up a rival candidate.

A little later, Mrs. Barden, whose curiosity had been aroused about the jewels, cried out from her seat at a window commanding the avenue: "There is a young man coming up to the house now. I shouldn't be at all surprised if he were the jeweler. He is very gentlemanly-looking, certainly, but then such a man doubtless would be."

"How tiresome!" cried Sylvia. "Then I shall have to go with him to the safe, and I wanted——"

The words died on her lips as, looking over Mrs. Barden's head, she caught sight of the approaching visitor. She repressed an exclamation of delight. There was no fear of her mistaking the form, the bearing, of the man to whom she had given her heart. A jeweler's assistant, indeed!

He had come in spite of her uncle's prohibition. How like his daring! And then a sudden thought struck her. Why not utilise Mrs. Barden's mistake to get the few words with her lover for which she was craving? Here was a chance she might not have again to assure him of her constancy and steadfastness, to hear him say again that he loved her and would wait for her till she was free.

"I will tell Blake where to show him," she said, and slipped from the room.

The old butler, on his way to open the

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door, was surprised to feel his young mistress' hand on his arm, to see two pleading eyes raised to his.

"Blake," she said intreatingly, "Mrs. Barden thinks this is the jewelers' man coming. Don't—don't be surprised, Blake, if he looks like someone else we know, but show him into the library where the safe is. You see, it's the only chance I shall have for months and months, Blake!"

"Very good, miss," said Blake. He was a soft-hearted man, and could hardly have refused anything to those beautiful, pleading eyes.

He was not surprised when he saw who the visitor was. The servants' hall had long been interested in the budding romance.

"Sir William is not in, but will you kindly step this way, sir?"

Bertie Westnutt followed him into the library. He had not been there many minutes before the door was softly opened, and Sylvia, timid but radiant, stood on the threshold.

"It was Sir William you wanted to see?" she asked demurely.

"Never mind. You will do," said Bertie, as he clasped her in his arms. "Oh, my darling, what an age since I have seen you!"

* * * * *

"Blake," said Mrs. Barden, standing at the drawing-room door. "Who was that?"

Blake coughed deprecatingly. "Mr.—er—Mr. Thompson, ma'am."

"From the jewelers?"

"I—I believe so, ma'am."

Mrs. Barden went back. She would much have liked to see those wonderful jewels, but after Sir William's angry glance she did not dare.

* * * * *

The 1.40 express from town had covered three-parts of the journey to Westfield, when at a small station a well-dressed man, with a long, thin nose and a ferret face, got out of his own compartment and entered the next one, in which there was a solitary traveler.

"Had to change," said the newcomer pleasantly. "A baby in the carriage apparently suffering from whooping-cough."

The occupant of the carriage murmured something sympathetic, but was evidently indisposed for conversation.

"Took away my appetite so that I couldn't eat my lunch," the other went on. He seemed to be making up for lost time now, by the way he attacked the sandwiches and sherry he took from his bag.

When he had finished he took out another bottle, and in trying to pour some of its contents into a tumbler, he stumbled forward awkwardly and spilt a good amount of the liquid on the opposite cushion close to his fellow traveler.

"Beg your pardon, I'm sure. Very clumsy of me. None of it went on you, I hope? It's only a tonic, but——"

For a tonic it had a strange, sickly odour. The other man made a move towards the window.

"Ah, yes, let us open the window," said the newcomer with obliging readiness. But he fumbled with the strap, keeping his own face close to the ventilator meanwhile.

When he turned round again, the other man's head had fallen forward feebly. It only needed the application of the bottle to his nose for a few minutes to make him lose consciousness entirely.

He was quickly bound and gagged by the other man, his pockets rifled of their contents, his bag taken possession of; and then the helpless body was carefully deposited under one of the seats.

It was the letters that seemed to interest the thief more than the small articles of jewelery.

"Ah, that's it!" he said, opening one addressed to Sir William Vereker, Bart.. "'to introduce our Mr. Thompson'—that's the ticket!"

He put it carefully into his own waistcoat pocket, and when the train drew up at Westfield he was quietly reading a daily paper, which he folded up methodically and placed on the seat.

"Will you kindly direct me to Burwood Hall?" he asked of the station-master. "It is quite close, I conclude, or Sir William would have sent to meet me."

"About ten minutes' walk, sir. You can see the towers there between the trees. First turn on the left and second on the right, sir."

"Thank you. Good-day!"

Hardly had he turned his back on the platform before a lady hastily entered the carriage he had left, carrying a handbag, an umbrella, a purse, a handkerchief, and some magazines; each of which articles she dropped successively in her flurry. A porter followed her with several small bags and parcels.

"Here, put them down—anywhere—now where's that threepenny bit?"

It had fallen and rolled under the seat, and she was groping to find it when she drew

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back with a fearful scream. "Porter, there's a MAN here!"

The porter jumped into the carriage, the station-master hurried up, and poor Mr. Thompson was quickly extricated from his uncomfortable position and freed from his bonds. He was soon restored to consciousness sufficiently to tell his tale, but he still suffered too much from vertigo and sickness to be able to continue his journey.

"The worst of it is," he said, "that the thief has taken my letter of introduction, and he may be impersonating me at Burwood Hall."

"The police inspector will see about that," said the station-master consolingly. "We have a telephone here to his office, and he is a most energetic man, and will be at the Hall in no time."

Mr. Jenkins, the inspector, bristled with importance as he listened to the story that came to him over the wires. It was not often such an exciting event happened at Westfield. "Our clever gentleman," he said to himself, "reckoned on his victim not being discovered for a long time, and on things moving rather slowly in a country place. He'll find himself mistaken this time! I'll take a constable and go off to Burwood Hall at once, and we shall catch him red-handed."

* * *

Mrs. Barden was sunning herself on the terrace in front of the hall door when, to her immense surprise, an inspector and a policeman came up the avenue and addressed her.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," said the former, "but can you tell me whether a man is here who represents himself as sent by Messrs. Malwood & Chiseller?"

"Messrs. Malwood & Chiseller, the jewelers? Yes, he is here now."

The inspector's eyes brightened. "That's good. Then we have him. We have reason to believe, ma'am, from information received, that this is a thief who drugged and robbed the real Mr. Thompson in the train."

"Goodness gracious!" cried the astounded lady. "And Miss Falconer is actually with him now! Have you come to arrest him?"

The inspector nodded. "It's a piece of good luck he hasn't got away yet. Can you show us up quietly to the room he is working in without alarming him?"

Mrs. Barden led the way to the library, summoning the wondering Blake, whom she saw in the hall, to accompany them.

"You will let me call the young lady out first?" she said. "It might give her a shock to see him arrested before her face. Pray Heaven he may not have murdered her! Sylvia, my love!" she cried out in a piercing tone. "Sylvia! Come quickly!"

Sylvia, whose interview with her lover had

When he turned round again, the other man's head had fallen forward feebly.

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seemed all too brief, tore herself away from his side.

"I'll be back in a minute, Bertie. I must see what she wants, and stop her from coming in here, or she'll see that I haven't even opened the safe."

"Give me the key," said Bertie. "I'll just open it in case she comes in."

But as Sylvia left the room two burly forms in blue entered it, and the inspector came up to him as he stood by the open safe, and laid a hand on his arm.

"You had better come with us quietly," he said.

"What does this mean?" cried Bertie. "Whom do you take me for?"

"*Not* for Mr. Thompson from Messrs. Malwood & Chiseller," said the inspector, who liked his little joke. "Now, my man, the less trouble you give us, the better it will be for you later on."

"You are making a little mistake," said Bertie calmly. "I am Captain Westnutt, of the —th Regiment."

"Oh, I dare say," returned the inspector; "only the lady of the house told us a different story."

Bertie caught sight of Blake outside, and called him in.

"Blake, perhaps you will kindly tell these —these jokers who I am."

"That's Captain Westnutt, the nephew of Mr. Westnutt, of Long Deene," said Blake promptly,

"Why, Blake!" said Mrs. Barden's voice, "you told me yourself it was Mr. Thompson."

"H'm!" said the inspector, "this looks uncommonly like complicity. I fancy, Mr. Blake, it will be my duty to arrest you also on suspicion of aiding and abetting in the robbery."

"Arrest *me!*" cried Blake, purple with anger.

Sylvia had been prevented hitherto by Mrs. Barden from entering the room, but she pushed her way in now.

"What do you want with Captain Westnutt?" she asked.

"I don't know if his name is Westnutt or not. I only know that I charge him with drugging and robbing a certain Mr. Thompson in the train," replied the inspector.

At that moment an under-footman came to the door, and stared aghast at seeing the two policemen.

"If you please," he stammered, "there's a gentleman downstairs says he is Mr. Thompson, from Messrs. Malwood & Chiseller."

"Ah!" said the inspector relieved; "now we shall be able to confront them. Will you have him shown in here, please?" he said to Mrs. Barden, whom he, being new to the neighbourhood, mistook for the mistress of the house.

The ferret-faced man who followed the footman into the library started back when he saw the two policemen and their captive.

"I am glad to see, Mr. Thompson, that you have sufficiently recovered from the dastardly attack to come on here," said the inspector.

"I—I still feel a bit shaken," was the reply. And indeed his pale face and somewhat disordered attire gave colour to his words. He gazed wonderingly from one person to another.

"Not too much so, I hope, to prevent your assisting us by pointing out your assailant?" said the inspector politely. "Do you see the man who drugged you here?"

The thief's ready brain had now grasped the situation. There was no doubt as to who was the suspected person, and he jumped at the chance of effecting his own escape.

He pointed unhesitatingly to Bertie Westnutt. "That was the man who drugged me in the train," he said.

An incredulous cry escaped from Sylvia, a chuckle of satisfaction from the inspector.

"I thought we hadn't made a mistake. Then you charge this man here with assault and robbery?"

"I do."

The footman's wondering face appeared in the doorway again. "Here's another gentleman says he is Mr. Thompson from Messrs. Malwood & Chiseller."

"I'll go and see him," said the latest claimant to that name, moving towards the door.

"You'll oblige me, Mr. Thompson," interposed the inspector hastily, "by remaining and confronting him here. This may be another confederate. At any rate I must get to the bottom of it."

The newcomer evinced no surprise at the scene before him. "Ah, Mr. Inspector," he said, "I am glad to see you have caught the man. I came on as soon as I was sufficiently recovered to see if I could help you."

The inspector eyed him keenly. "You claim to be the Mr. Thompson who was drugged and robbed in the train?" he asked.

"Of course I do," said the other in surprise.

"You have your credentials with you?"

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"Well no," replied the other calmly, "considering that this man" —pointing to him of the ferret-face —"took them from me when I was unconscious."

"What! You accuse *me* of robbing you? That is a good joke!"

The inspector looked slightly puzzled. Sylvia approached him, and spoke to him aside. "Since both these gentlemen claim to be Mr. Thompson, perhaps you might find out which is the right one by questioning them. I have the firm's letter to my uncle here."

The inspector took it in his hand and turned to the last-comer. "How long have you been in the firm's employ?"

"Fourteen years last February," was the reply.

He rubbed his head despondingly. "I never could remember."

"And you?" to the man with the ferret-face.

"It might be fourteen or it might be fifteen years," he said; "my head is still a little muddled."

"And what is their telephone number?"

He rubbed his head despondingly. "I never could remember. It was always a joke against me."

"Nor the telegraphic address?"

"Malchisel," suggested the man at a hazard, inwardly cursing his shortsightedness for not having learnt it.

The inspector turned to the other Mr. Thompson.

"No. 25,036 Gerrard," he said promptly, "and the telegraphic address is 'Amethysts.'"

"Of course, it was on the letter stolen from me," said the other. "These two are doubtless in league."

"Then the next thing will be to search you."

"I ask nothing better than to be searched," said Bertie, stepping forward eagerly.

"Oh, Bertie! such an indignity!" cried Sylvia in expostulation.

But the inspector was beginning to see daylight through the web of confusion. "Wait a bit, sir, it may not be necessary," he said in quite an altered tone.

Then he turned to the latest comer. "You have no objection?" he asked.

"Not the slightest," said the other with a smile. "It has been done so thoroughly already." And his pockets proved to be absolutely empty.

The other man saw resistance was useless, and submitted sullenly to be searched. In his pockets were found the firm's letter of introduction, another watch and chain beside

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his own, and two pocket-books; his bag contained beside the jeweler's usual implements, a collection of imitation rubies of various sizes, evidently intended as substitutes for the real ones.

In the middle of the investigation Sir William returned, beaming with good humour after a victory over his opponent.

He was somewhat amazed to find his library invaded by such a crowd, but the inspector in a few words put him in possession of the whole story. Luckily the baronet had a remarkable memory for faces, and he recognised Thompson at once having seen him several times in the shop. So the inspector carried off his prisoner, after being highly lauded by Sir William for his zeal and promptness.

He took it rather shamefacedly.

"I owe this gentleman a humble apology," he said, turning to Bertie Westnutt. "Hope you won't bear me a grudge, sir."

"Not a bit," said Bertie, who could not get over his astonishment at Sir William taking his presence there so quietly, after his furious letter of a few days before. "Can't blame a man for doing his duty."

"It was all Blake's fault," said Mrs. Barden, when the real Mr. Thompson had been carried off to have some refreshment before beginning his labours, and the police had withdrawn. "He told me distinctly that that was Mr. Thompson."

"And that was *my* fault," said Sylvia. "You took him for Mr. Thompson, and I begged Blake not to undeceive you. It seemed the only chance I should have of speaking to Bertie." She laid her hand intreatingly on her uncle's hand as she spoke.

"So," chuckled the baronet, "Westnutt has to thank you for his being very nearly arrested as a thief! Well, well, you will have to see if you can ever get him to forgive you. What I can't understand," he went on, ignoring the bewildered glances the young people were exchanging, "is how the inspector managed to get here first. What became of the thief in the time between his leaving the station and his getting here?"

Blake, who had not yet recovered from the blow to his dignity caused by the inspector's mention of his arrest, re-entered the room at this moment and said: "I can explain it, Sir William. I have just heard that a man on his way from the station was knocked down at Freeman's Corner by a motor-car. Freeman came out and took him into his cottage, but he was really more shaken than hurt."

"H'm," said the baronet, "he didn't deserve to escape so easily when better men are often killed outright. That accounts for his dilapidated appearance, which made him look so much like the injured man."

Meanwhile Sylvia and Bertie in low tones had been wondering what this change in the baronet's demeanour might portend.

Sir William watched them a few minutes, and then, dismissing Mrs. Barden and Blake, he said to Bertie:

"Let me tell you, Westnutt, that your uncle and I have entered into an alliance offensive and defensive against that rascal Levett. It was by your uncle's help that I defeated him to-day, and then he somehow got on the soft side of me and persuaded me to take back my objections to your engagement. Says your confounded political opinions are but the effervescence of youth, and that nothing is so likely to help you to see things in their true light as having a sweet little wife by your side who has been brought up in a right way."

Bertie wisely refrained from entering into this question, but he was profuse in his gratitude for Sir William's consent.

Sylvia put her arm round her guardian's neck and kissed him heartily.

"Oh, ho!" said he in his exuberant geniality, "it used to be a very shy little peck you gave me. Somebody has been giving you lessons evidently."

Bertie hastily interposed to cover Sylvia's confusion: "I should be very happy to undertake the duties of tuition, sir."

"I dare say you would, you rogue! Well, run away now, the pair of you. I have a hundred and fifty things to see to this afternoon."

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Picture Paragraphs.

The Editor Cordially Invites All Readers to Contribute to These Pages. Liberal Payment is Made for All Photographs of Curiosities Accepted. A Description of the Subject Illustrated shou'd Accompany Each Photograph.

Photo *Topical Press Agency.*

This is a one horse-power carriage invented by a Parisian. As may be seen, he has put "the cart before the horse."

A QUAINT CONVEYANCE.

A RECENT novelty in Paris is what its inventor, M. Paul Duchereau, terms an "*autohippique.*" This ingenious vehicle is something like a motor-car, but is propelled by a horse. The driver sits in front of the animal in a little car shaped like the front part of a motor, where he attends to the guidance of his conveyance.

At the back, the horse is harnessed between two shafts in the ordinary way. Each shaft is entirely supported by a rubber-tyred wheel.

The driver steers by means of a steering wheel similar to those in use on motor-cars. Two pedals under his feet control spurs, which are worked by springs, and are employed to regulate the pace of the horse.

When it is necessary to stop the animal, a movable screen is lifted in front of its nose by means of another pedal, causing it to stop at once.

A small manger is attached to the back of the driver's seat, whence the horse obtains refreshment when the vehicle is at a standstill.

The inventor of this turnout claims that greater speed can be obtained by his invention, since the horse has no weight to support as in the case of an ordinary cart.

It takes some little time, and a certain amount of patience, to accustom a horse to this vehicle.

A WONDERFUL ROSE-GARDEN.

THIS beautiful mass of white "Lady Banksia" roses was photographed in California. Owing largely to the almost perfect climate of that state, flowers are always plentiful throughout the year, and one kind rapidly succeeds another.

As will be seen, the rose has almost smothered the house, which peeps out here and there amid the masses of white blossoms.

California is certainly the gardener's Paradise, for practically his only task is to curtail the growth of his flowers and prevent their becoming too luxuriant.

The fruit-growing industry is very important in this part of the United States, large quantities of oranges being exported. Quantities of fruit grown there are canned, and thus the inhabitants of countries such as our own are able to enjoy fruit at seasons of the year when it would not otherwise be available.

A Californian house almost hidden beneath White "Lady Banksia" roses.

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THE WORLD'S BIGGEST INDOOR BANQUET.

"The custom of eating meals," a learned professor is reported to have said, "is very ancient, and the date of its origin is lost."

Probably the biggest meal ever eaten was that consumed by fifty thousand "Mutualists" in honour of the then President Loubet, on Nov. 5th of last year—Guy Fawkes' Day.

This stupendous gathering took place in the Galerie des Machines at Paris, and no doubt was thoroughly enjoyable. All the tables were numbered, but a solitary guest must have found a little difficulty in discovering his place unaided.

History does not relate how many sheep and oxen were dispatched on this occasion, or how many times all the loaves eaten would incircle the world if placed end to end; but the quantity of food which had to be provided was immense.

The number of bottles of wine drunk was also a not inconsiderable item. Since no one drinks water in Paris for fear of coming to an untimely end, the wine-merchant's bill was doubtless heavy.

Photo *Scientific American.*

The latest thing in ice-motors. It is a forty-two h.p. vehicle, and covered eighteen miles an hour on its trial trip.

AN ICE-MOTOR.

The chief object its inventor had in view when experimenting with an ice-motor was to improve winter transportation in Alaska. At present freight is carried by dog-sled, for a consideration of from £20 to £200 a ton.

The ice-car is propelled by a steam-engine, but is supported by four steel spirals instead of runners, as in the case of an ordinary sled.

The edges of the blades on the spirals are like skate blades, in order to allow a good grip of the ice. Each spiral has a separate engine, and the engines can be worked simultaneously or independently, at will.

The largest banquet ever held under one roof. On Nov. 5th, 1905, fifty thousand "Mutualists" lunched in honour of the then President Loubet at the Galerie des Machines, Paris.

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ITALY'S IDOLS.

The Bersaglieri.

The Bersaglieri are the picked men of the Italian Army. They are what their name signifies in Italian — sharpshooters—and are alike the pride of their country and the terror of their enemies.

The Bersaglieri were first organised in the Sardinian Army, in 1836.

They made a name for themselves in the Crimea, and kept up their reputation in the Italian War of Independence.

There are over forty-six thousand of them in the Italian Army of to-day.

They wear a dark green uniform, and an altogether distinctive headdress, consisting of a wide felt hat, crowned by an enormous plume of cock's feathers.

The men are very highly trained, and perform extraordinary gymnastic feats. They are exercised in every possible way, and can climb like mountain goats.

No obstacles are insuperable for them, and no country, however difficult, will stop them. In addition to this, they are crack shots, and all of them are men of splendid physique.

The pick of the Italian recruits are drafted into their ranks.

All their fellow countrymen regard them with pride, while numerous Italian popular songs celebrate the glory of their life.

A jumping exercise in full uniform. This is a very useful preparation for covering rough country in war time.

A more violent series of jumps. The men are continually exercising in this way in order to keep fit.

High jumping in full marching order. This is an extremely difficult feat, as the man is carrying his rifle.

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Photo. *J. Boyer.*

This little dwarf, who was recently appearing on the stage in Paris, is one of the smallest beings in existence.

A VERY SMALL MAN AND—

THE little fellow in the picture above, for all his military equipment, does not look particularly awe-inspiring. He is one of the smallest human beings at present in existence, and recently appeared on the stage in Paris. The man holding his hand is Mr. F. C. Bostock, of the Paris Hippodrome.

This dwarf is a most perfect miniature specimen of humanity, and, with the exception of being dumb, he is in full possession of his faculties.

He is twenty-two years old, and was recently called upon for service in the French Army.

Greatly to his astonishment, he was not allowed to enter the cavalry.

The public seems always to show a great predilection for dwarfs. When the little Burmese, Smaun Sing Hpoo, appeared at the Lyceum Theatre, London, some months ago, he proved an immense attraction.

Probably the stories told us in our early years concerning Tom Thumb and his adventures have something to do with our interest in remarkably small members of the human race.

However this may be, they are always certain of a large audience whenever they appear in public.

—A VERY BIG ONE.

A STRIKING contrast to the individual on the first column of this page is Mr. Peter O'Connor, the genial giant depicted below.

Mr. O'Connor hails from the Emerald Isle, and was born in County Kildare. He is considerably over seven feet in height, and broad in proportion.

An ordinary well-grown man of six feet contracts a serious neck-ache when talking to Mr. O'Connor, since he is obliged continually to look upwards.

The volunteer who is photographed beside this gigantic man is 5 ft. 10 in. high, but he looks insignificant beside his companion.

Mr. O'Connor is a poster inspector in the employment of Messrs. Palethorpe, the well-known sausage manufacturers. He rides a bicycle — an enormous machine, specially reinforced with a double top bar. Although so tall, Mr. O'Connor is not the least ungainly in appearance. He is a splendidly built man, broad in proportion to his height, and presents a remarkably imposing appearance.

Mr. Peter O'Connor, who is well over seven feet in height. The volunteer measures about 5 feet 10 inches.

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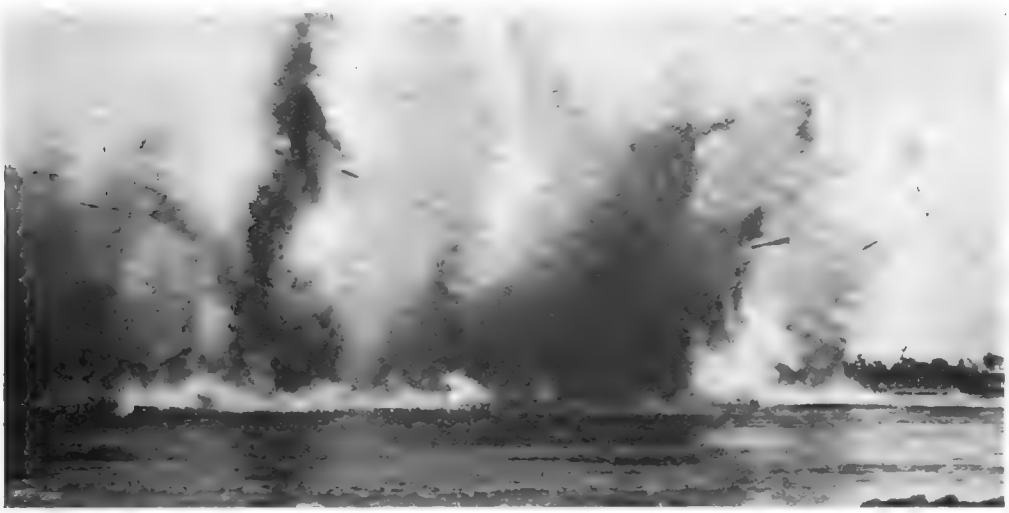
A MIGHTY EXPLOSION.

FIFTEEN THOUSAND SQUARE YARDS OF SOLID EARTH REMOVED.

I.—In constructing the U.S. Navy Dockyard at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 15,000 square yards of a promontory were removed. The dangerous area was first inclosed by a huge wall of timber, and then pumped dry. Nine hundred men then excavated the inclosure to the required depth. When this had been done, a ring of earth and rock was left supporting the wooden wall, and this was blown up by dynamite.



II.—Care had to be taken not to cause an explosion big enough to injure adjacent property. Thirty-five tons of dynamite were required, divided into 205 charges, sunk into the rock, and 52,800 feet of wire were used to connect up the charges. They were fired from a distance of 1000 yards by Miss Foster, the daughter of the engineer-in-charge. When she pressed the button, which switched on a current of 110 volts, a huge mass of water rose 100 feet in the air.

III.—The settlement of the water created a huge tidal wave in the river, 1000 feet long. The explosion was a complete success, and widened the river by 350 feet.

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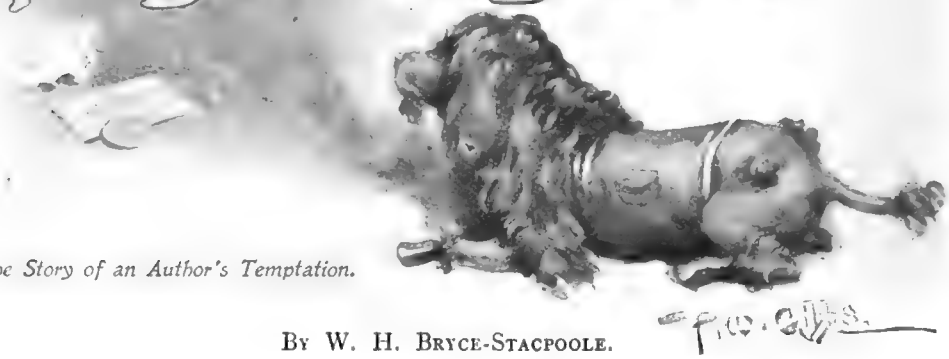
THE DOG IN BOOTS



The Story of an Author's Temptation.

By W. H. Bryce-Stacpoole.

We were talking of the mean things that men do when driven to desperation by want of food or want of money. There were three of us. We had just dined, and we all had money in our pockets, so we were reviewing the subject from a distance, so to speak.

I had just enunciated the opinion that a man with a starving wife and family who did not strive to obtain food for them by fair or the foulest of foul means was a scoundrel, and Lowenthal, a young Saxon, with a lucrative post in the City and a volume of Schiller in his pocket, had just thrown up his hands in horror at my views, when MacKenzie, the third man, took his pipe from his mouth.

"Have you ever had a wife and family starving on your hands?" he asked me.

"No."

"Have you?" He turned to Lowenthal, who was scarcely twenty, and who looked scarcely sixteen.

"No—but——"

"Neither of you know anything of what you are talking about. I do."

He relapsed into silence, and seemed engaged in gloomy introspection; then he tapped the ashes out of his pipe, and told us the following story:

"I hadn't a family at the time, but I had a wife. My book, 'The Vestiges of a Vanished World,' was finished, and had been sent to Denman's—seven hundred pages of manuscript, the outcome of four years' work and ten years' meditation. It had been under Denman's consideration three months; the time was overdue for their decision, and every postman's knock sounded to me like the crack of doom.

"A book like that, when it is completed and done with, leaves the mind a wilderness, a country locust-stripped. It leaves the purse of a poor man in the same condition. I had lived in the British Museum Library pretty much altogether during the last few months of its completion, and during the weary three months of waiting for Denman's answer Jeannie and I had lived pretty much altogether on porridge.

"Jeannie is my wife—God bless her! Porridge, that was what we lived on. I tried my hand at little articles, but they weren't any use; I'm worth nothing unless I have plenty of elbow room, and I cut a poor figure when I have to confine myself to a few pages in a magazine.

"One evening things had arrived at their worst—our last penny was gone, the rent was overdue, and between fog and cold the weather was fearful. It was eight o'clock, and I had just arrived at our rooms from the Museum. The fire was out, Jeannie was out, and a notice lay on the table from the landlord that if the rent were not paid by the next day at noon *we*'d have to go out.

"In a fit of mad extravagance begotten of despair, I lit a second candle, and was sitting down to consider the matter, when I heard a noise at the door—a sniffing and blowing noise, followed by a whimpering, as if some small beastie were asking to get in.

"On my way home from the Museum I noticed that a dog was following me, but I had lost sight of it in Gordon Square, and had thought no more of the matter. I remembered it now, and got up and opened the door. And there, sure enough, was a dog—

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but a dog dressed up in a fashion beyond all reason and sense.

"The Almighty had constructed him in the fashion and form of a poodle, a black Russian poodle and nothing more—some foolish woman had done the rest.

"The smell of him was like the smell of the Spice Islands, which is not the natural perfume of a dog; he wore a black coat embroidered with gold braid and fitted with a wee pocket on either side, and he had boots on. I am not telling you a lie; he had boots on—stubby boots of black leather, laced up his legs.

"He stood there before me at the door, a living monument, as it were, to the folly of a man or woman, and there stood I, my mouth open, staring at him like an idiot. Then I said 'Come in,' and in he came.

"I sat down by the table, he standing in front of me and lolling his tongue out; then down he went on the floor like a Sphinx, and rested his chin on his fore-boots, looking up at me like a good-natured animal.

"I thought of the poodle in *Faust*, and fell to wondering from what lunatic asylum the person could have escaped who owned the beast. From that I passed to the consideration of the fit of its coat, and speculated as to what could possibly be in the pockets. I can tell you exactly what was in those pockets, for I searched them, the owner nothing loth. In one there was a pocket-handkerchief about four times as big as a postage-stamp, and a visiting card inscribed 'Mr. Pistache, 10 Vandeleur Gardens, W.'; in the other, three golden sovereigns wrapped in tissue-paper.

"When Jeannie came home half-an-hour later she found that I had gone out. She lit the fire and waited, cooking some porridge. When I came in she asked me what had delayed me.

"'I found a stray dog,' said I, 'and took him to the nearest police station for them to send him home.'

"'Poor thing,' said she, 'it was a good act. Well, sit down, Jock, and have your supper."

"'Put the porridge away,' I said, 'and come out with me.'

"I took her to a little café near by (she going in a puzzled way, but asking no explanation), and we had supper.

"'What's the rent due to-morrow?' I asked, as we sat there considering the bill of fare.

"'Twenty-six shillings,' said she, 'and

"I sat down by the table, he standing in front of me and lolling his tongue out."

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The door opened, and in came the owner of Pistache.

where we're to get it from Heaven only knows.'

"I handed her two pounds, and when she asked me where I'd got it from I told her that I'd borrowed it. So I had.

"But I could not sleep that night. In my ear a voice kept repeating: 'Jock MacKenzie, you've robbed a dog; Jock MacKenzie, you've robbed a dog.'

"I got up and walked about the room, and when Jeannie asked me what was wrong I said I had the toothache. Out I went at six, and walked about the streets, but the voice came after me: 'You've robbed a dog, Jock MacKenzie, you've robbed a dog.' It drove me West, this voice, and I found myself asking policemen and postmen for Vandeleur Gardens. It was conscience that was driving me; I had no more volition before it than a cloud has before the wind.

"When I arrived at No. 10, a maid was cleaning the steps. I asked her if her master was in, and she nodded, but said he was not down yet. 'Give him my card,' said I, 'and tell him I must speak to him at once.'

"She showed me into a library very well furnished with books, and shut the door on me. I sat down, feeling that the world had come to an end so far as I was concerned. Then I tried to fancy what sort of a man the owner of Pistache would be, and what sort of a policeman he'd call to lug me off to gaol.

"Then, with a great thump at my heart, the idea came to me that I was a fool, and that I'd better bolt whilst bolt I might; and I was rising to put into execution this new inclination when the door opened, and in came the owner of Pistache.

"He was a tall man, all bones and angles, and I'd seen him before somewhere; at least, he looked like the badly-done photograph of someone I'd known in a past life.

"'Hullo! Jock MacKenzie,' he cried, 'don't you know me? You've come, I suppose, for news about your book. We've taken it, but how did you find my private address?'

"'For the Lord's sake, tell me who you are!' I cried excitedly. 'Why—surely to goodness—you're McKay!'

"'I am,' said he.

"'And the last time we met,' I said, 'was thirteen long years ago, and you were tearing a policeman's coat off in the Canongate o' Auld Reekie.'

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"'Students will be students,' said he. 'Let bygones be bygones. I'm head and tail of Denman's now. We've accepted your book. Man! it's a grand book, though it's all against the rules of publishing to make such a statement to an author.'

"'O, Sandy McKay! Sandy McKay!' said I. 'It may be a grand book, but if you hadn't been such a grand time considering it you wouldn't have made me what I am—a felon and a thief!'

"'Hoots, man!' he cried. 'What's this I hear you say?'

"'Have you a dog,' said I, 'that goes by the name of Pistache? A dog that goes about in boots with sovereigns in its pockets to tempt the integrity of broken-down authors?'

"'Oh! he's daft,' cried McKay, throwing up his eyes and hands, and making a back step towards the door.

"'I am not daft,' I replied. 'Have you a dog named Pistache?'

"'My wife has a brute of that name,' he made answer. 'It's the worry of the household and the bugbear of my life. Only last night he was brought home by a policeman, and there was five shillings to pay.'

"'Well, listen,' I said, and with that I told him the whole diabolical tale.

"'Say no more,' said he, when I had finished. 'I'll take it out of your royalties. "Three-pun-ten," you said?'

"'It was not,' I replied. 'It was three pounds.'

"'Well, so be it,' said he. 'And you want fifty pounds advanced on account of royalties, you tell me? I'll give you a cheque for forty-seven pounds this day, and I'll forgive you freely for taking the loan from Mr. Pistache. But there's one thing I'll never forgive you for, Jock MacKenzie.'

"'And what's that?' I asked.

"'Sending the brute back,' said he, and with that he took me by the arm and led me in to breakfast. There I met Mrs. McKay, a little Frenchified woman, and Pistache resplendent in a morning toilet consisting of bows of ribbon.

"I received McKay's cheque that day for forty-seven pounds, and the next cheque he drew in my favour was for a long sight more—a long sight more. Fifteen hundred pounds was the amount, less forty-seven pounds paid on account of royalties, and three pounds borrowed from Mr. Anatole Volauvent Pastile Pistache."

THE THREE WISHES

Photo Stuart, Newcastle.

I wish I had a hat like that;
A hat that, though you squash it flat,
Or sit on it with might and main,
Will take its former shape again.
I *wish* I had a hat like that!

I wish I had those soft, brown eyes
That shine like stars in frosty skies;
Dark eyes, as joy or grief appears
Alight with smiles, or bright with tears.
I *wish* I had those soft, brown eyes!

I wish I had that curly hair—
Bewitching frame for face so fair!—
Which seems, as through its threads they
To give the sunbeams added grace. [race,
I *wish* I had that curly hair!

And yet I grudge the maid no whit
Of all her charms so exquisite;
Rather than own them, I prefer
To gaze on them as seen in her.

F. E Relly

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MR. —HIS PAGES.

Two Couple of Capital Columns of Comical Catches, Curious Curiosities, and Cryptogrammic Conundrums Coined or Collected by this Canny Contributor.

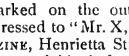
Puzzle Penknives, Puzzle Purses, or Packs of ROYAL Playing Cards, will be given as prizes to readers who forward new puzzles, problems, or other tricks which are inserted in this feature. Any readers communicating with "Mr. X," and wishing for a reply should inclose a stamped, addressed envelope. All letters should be addressed to "Mr. X" (care of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE), 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

STEP BY STEP.

When "Mr. X" was writing a letter the other day, he wrote this sentence: "I am not sure about Frank's bicycle, I think he said it had a free-wheel." Now if you will look at the first seven words of that—"I am not sure about Frank's bicycle,"—you will see that the first word contains one letter, the second two, the third three, and so on—five letters, six letters, seven letters.

This suggests a competition. "Mr. X" offers a prize of five shillings for what is in his opinion the best complete sentence constructed on these lines. Each word, that is, must be followed by a word containing one more letter. You need not start with a one-letter word; you may begin with any number you like.

Letters, marked on the outside "Step," should be addressed to "Mr. X," care of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and must reach him before August 20th.



Q. Why is the horse one of the most curious animals alive?

A. Because he eats best when he hasn't a *bit* in his mouth.

A MATTER OF SPELLING.

MACK: "I say, two friends of mine ate oysters the other day for a wager. One got through ninety-nine, the other ate a hundred and won. Who got the wager?"

HARNESS: "Why, of course, the chap who ate a hundred and one."

MACK: "No."

HARNESS: "Oh, it's some catch, I suppose—the chap who ate ninety-nine, then."

MACK: "Wrong again, old boy. Try the fellow who ate a hundred—and WON."

TWO TRICKS WITH A PLATE.

1. Beneath the plate place a coin: say that you will remove the coin without touching the plate. Make mysterious passes over the plate, then say, "Now lift it up." Someone does so, when you at once remove the coin!

2. Bet someone that you will so place a thimble, that though it will be in general view, he will be unable to knock it over with a plate. When your wager is taken, place the thimble in a corner of the room—no ordinary plate can touch it.

A SLIGHT MISUNDERSTANDING.

SMITH MINOR: "Hullo, Jones, have you heard how old Brown is this morning?"

JONES MAJOR: "No. I didn't know he was ill."

SMITH MINOR: "Well, he's not, so far as I know."

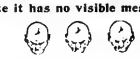
JONES MAJOR: "Well, why did you ask how he was, you young ass?"

SMITH MINOR: "I didn't ask how he was; I asked if you had heard how *old* he was."

[*Swift flight and pursuit across the quad.*]

Q. Why is a balloon like a vagabond?

A. Because it has no visible means of support.



DISTRESSING BATHING FATALITY.

GEORGE (looking up from his paper): "I see three children have been washed ashore at Cromer."

VERE: "Oh, dear! How did it happen?"

GEORGE: "Oh, I expect it was easier to wash them there than to take them out to sea for the purpose."

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A Little Problem.

A friend of "Mr. X" owed her confectioner ninepence for biscuits. In payment, she brought to the shop thirteen fresh eggs. But this number did not square the deal. "Bring me three more eggs," said the confectioner, "then I will give you threepence, and we shall be all square."

For quite a while "Mr. X's" friend puzzled over this arithmetic—and it *is* rather puzzling, but it is quite correct. What was the market value of the eggs?

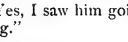
A Close Shave.

GILES: "Farmer Thomas had a narrow squeak on market day.'

GAFFER: "Oh?"

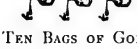
GILES: "Yes, I saw him going home with a very thin pig."

[*And the joke?*—ED. ROYAL.
A narrow squeak—a thin pig, don't you see?—MR. X.
Oh, that's the joke?—ED. ROYAL.
Yes, that's it.—MR. X.
Thanks.—ED. ROYAL.]



Ten Bags of Gold.

It is possible to arrange 1000 sovereigns in ten bags in such a manner as to enable any number of sovereigns to be taken (from one to a thousand) without opening any bag. How many would you have to put in each bag?

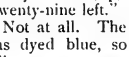


Beware of Chestnuts.

BROOKS: "A farmer had thirty-six sheep, and one he had dyed. How many did he have left?"

RIVERS: "Oh, that is so *frightfully* old. It is really thirty *sick* sheep, so when one died he had twenty-nine left."

BROOKS: "Not at all. The one I'm talking about was dyed blue, so he still had thirty-six left."



A Little Rhyme.

Every lady in the land has twenty nails upon each hand. Five-and-twenty on hands and feet—this is all truth without deceit.

[NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—*I have wired to "Mr. X," pointing out the impossibility of the statements in the above paragraph. He replies, "Something evident's gone wrong with punctuation. Nice little puzzle for readers to correct it and make sense."*]

A Safe Feat.

This is a conjuring trick which you cannot fail to bring off safely. Under each of three hats place a piece of bread. Now lift each hat and eat the bread lying beneath it; make a great show of this eating as this adds to the effect of your next remark.

"Now," you say, "though you have all clearly seen me eat that bread, just say under which hat you would like the bread to be, and it shall be done."

Someone chooses.

You raise the hat selected and place it on your head!

Two Tricks with a Clothes-Brush.

The first is made possible by the fact that when a man's back is brushed with a clothes-brush he does not feel the bristles—he only hears the scraping and feels the pressure. Tell someone this, and bet him he won't tell you when you are using the brush on him and when you are not. Brush his back several times with the brush, then, without pausing in the motions, press your hand down his back and rub the brush along your own coat. He will think he is still being brushed.

The second trick wins you sixpence. Hold out your hand with the fingers together and pressed back. On the palm lay a sixpence. Now offer to give this to your friend if he can sweep it from your hand with a clothes-brush:

if he fails in, say, a dozen attempts, he must give you sixpence. He will fail. But you must bargain that he brushes fairly, with straight sweeps—he must not dab at the coin.

RESULTS.

HOW TO CATCH FIVE SHILLINGS.—The competition under this heading in the May ROYAL was one of the most successful "Mr. X" has arranged. He thanks the many readers who forwarded him excellent catches. To the sender of each catch printed, a purple penknife, purse, or ROYAL pack of playing cards has been sent. "Mr. X" considers the catch sent by Mrs. F. Chadwick Brooke, 5, Tenby Avenue, Withington, Manchester, the best, and has awarded him the prize of Five Shillings.

A LITTLE PROBLEM.—Three farthings each.

TEN BAGS OF GOLD:

Put	1 sovereign	into No. 1	bag.
,,	2 sovereigns	,, 2	,,
,,	4 ,,	,, 3	,,
,,	8 ,,	,, 4	,,
,,	16 ,,	,, 5	,,
,,	32 ,,	,, 6	,,
,,	64 ,,	,, 7	,,
,,	128 ,,	,, 8	,,
,,	256 ,,	,, 9	,,
,,	489 ,,	,, 10	,,

A LITTLE RHYME.—Every lady in the land has twenty nails Upon each hand five, and twenty on hands and feet.

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The Race of Number 19

An American Story of Speed.

By Leroy Scott.

There was trouble in the office of Peck & Morgan, makers of the Peck Motor Car—"the king of the automobile world," to quote from the inch advertisements written by Mr. Peck. Mr. Peck was glaring at the youthful Mr. Morgan, and Mr. Morgan was looking, in resentful gloom, at the red-faced, white-whiskered Mr. Peck.

"No, sir! I don't put another cent into this blamed business," snapped Mr. Peck. "Who wants our automobile? Nobody. We lose money every day; we pretend to keep on making 'em. A little later we'll be bankrupt; I won't have the disgrace of bankruptcy against my good name. I'm for selling the business now—or giving it away."

"It's easy for you to talk about giving it away—you with your millions to fall back on," said Morgan bitterly.

"If I put any more in, as you want me to, I wouldn't have 'em to fall back on," retorted Mr. Peck.

"You'd have a few more if you'd spend fifty or a hundred thousand—"

"Oh, shut up! I'm tired of that. Haven't I been telling you since we started two years ago: show me results and I'd come up with more money?"

"And haven't I been telling you," Morgan returned sharply: "come up with more money and I'd show you results?"

Mr. Peck glared, but thought silence the best expression of his contempt. Together the last sentence of each defined the difference between the partners—the difference that during the two years had galled and restrained Morgan's enterprise like a sharp and tight-drawn bit—the difference that now brought the partners to the verge of a quarrel. Mr. Peck was the business product of a past business generation; even when making his millions out of the Peck sewing machine, he had never ventured—had never led his business, had always followed it.

Four years before, after two bad years, which he read as a warning of ruin, he had craftily sold out his business and its coming failure to a Mr. Tucker, and it was the great secret bitterness of his life that Mr. Tucker was making money faster than he had ever done.

Two years of stupid leisure had made him eager for the old recreation of business; so when young Morgan, a mechanical engineer of reputation, had come to him with a patent sparking device and a proposition for putting a new automobile on the market, he had invested his old business rules and about half enough capital in the new enterprise, keeping a throttle hold on the venture by reserving to himself fifty-one per cent. of the stock.

Morgan mastered his rising anger. Mr. Peck, through his money, could turn failure into success; and, furthermore, Mr. Peck was the father of Miss Peck.

"We still have a chance to make the car a success if we play the chance right," he resumed, as calm as his double reason for calmness could make him. "The car is a good one, and deserves to succeed; that much is true."

"Oh, I don't know. We thought it was a good car. But if a thing is good, it's bound

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to succeed of its own accord; everybody wants it; you can't make it fail."

"I beg your pardon, a good thing does not succeed just because it's good. You've got to convince people that it's good—the best there is, if you can; you've got to get it on the public tongue and in the public eye and keep it there. Then it'll succeed."

"At it again!" sniffed Mr. Peck.

Morgan's face flushed, but he went on composedly:

"Now, if we could make some big splash—could pull off some big advertising scheme—"

"Advertising! Rot!"

"Advertising is what made Tucker."

Mr. Peck's face darkened, but he dared not retort. That was the worst of his bitterness over Tucker's success—it had to be restrained in fear of the world's laughs. He was silent a moment, then said, in his sneering voice:

"Leading up again to that American Cup race, I see."

"I am; and why not? There's not a swifter and more reliable touring car made in this country than our fifty horse-power. A racing car embodying its good points, I bet would hold its own with the best of them. If the Peck car won the cup, or got second or third place, we'd suddenly be somebody, and orders would pour in on us. If you'd put up twenty thousand for this—"

Mr. Peck uprose, snorting:

"Shut up; I'm tired of that. And let me hand you some information. Young man, you're a business idiot!"

Morgan saw that his chance was gone; his wrath broke its restraints.

"And permit me to remark, my dear sir, that you are a business corpse!"

Mr. Peck gasped. All his life he had bullied his business associates and never before had one bullied him back.

"What's that! What's that!" He smashed his pudgy fist down on his desk. "By Heaven, we'll see who's the live member of this firm! I get out to-day and we'll see how long you'll keep alive!"

"If you'd done that long ago!"

Mr. Peck spluttered.

Morgan's anger had risen to reckless defiance.

"Why don't you sell your stock to me?" he taunted. "I'll build that racing car, win, and show you what a live business is!"

"Sell it to you? You haven't got a dollar to pay for it with!"

"I'll give you a note; if there's nothing else to pay with, I can sell my patent."

Mr. Peck's dark look turned to a snarling, cunning grin.

"It's yours! If I sold to anybody else, he might bring in some capital and some brains, and you might succeed. Running it alone you'll bust. Lord, but I'll be glad to see that! A business corpse, am I? We'll see! It's worth less than nothing, but you can have it for five hundred, a thousand, two thousand, whatever you please!"

"Two thousand, then," said Morgan.

He touched a button, and immediately a stenographer appeared. Mr. Peck looked glowering on while Morgan dictated a bill of sale, the consideration being a note for two thousand dollars. Perhaps he was not wholly pleased; perhaps, for all his bluster, he had not expected to be snapped up in this wise. But he grimly signed the document when it was presented him, and grimly slipped Morgan's note into his wallet.

He rose and put on his hat.

"I had thought of going away on a vacation," he said cuttingly, "but I guess I'll stay here so's to be handy for your funeral."

Morgan did not retort; he had regained his self-control.

"One fact, of course, you understand," Mr. Peck went on. "You've been seeing a lot of Miss Peck. Well, no daughter of mine is going to have anything to do with a fool and a failure. You set that down!"

Morgan preserved a show of indifference, but there was sudden consternation within. In the outburst of wrath against the father he had completely forgotten the daughter.

At the door Mr. Peck lifted his hat with mock courtesy.

"Don't forget to send me an announcement of the funeral!" he said; and, with a bow and a sneer, he went out.

* * * * *

When Morgan declared to Mr. Peck that he was going to build a racer he had spoken out of the bravado of the moment, but as he sat at his desk looking his new situation over, his cool reason told him that to try for the American Cup was his only chance of snatching success from failure.

He considered his resources for such an effort; if he were to mortgage to its limits the factory equipment (the building was a rented one), and borrow and beg dollars wherever dollars could be begged and borrowed, he could keep up the appearance of running the factory for three months longer.

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and could build a car for the race. The odds against such success were heavy. But Morgan was the sort that fights to the last hope, and past it. He would take the chance.

All the while that Morgan was studying this side and that of his slender business chance, part of his mind was engaged upon his chance in a very different enterprise. By the end of the afternoon it was this enterprise alone that he was considering. He knew that Mr. Peck would tell, doubtless had told, his daughter of the quarrel, and that the account would be a story of favour and forbearance on one side, and insult and ingratitude on the other.

If he wanted Miss Peck to continue thinking of him the way he hoped she was beginning to think, he must clear himself in her eyes, and the sooner he did this the better for her thoughts of him. So, with inward trembling at his daring, he called her up just before leaving the office, and asked if he might see her that evening.

The voice that came to him over the wire was chilly, very chilly.

"I have an engagement."

Morgan was dumb for several seconds.

"To-morrow evening, perhaps?"

"I shall be busy then, too."

He was filled with a dizzy sickness. Her excuse was as plain in its meaning as plain words would have been. But he wanted the plain words.

"Then you don't want to see me?"

There was a brief silence.

"I don't think I do," said the chilly voice.

Morgan hung up the receiver. His pride would not let him beg for an interview. Besides, he suddenly felt the utter futility of persisting; himself nine-tenths a failure, her father bitter against him, she indifferent, or she would not have been so readily alienated.

The following two days Morgan spent in New York. He returned with fifteen thousand dollars, and with his honour pawned to his friends, and with the next five years of his life sold to the money-lenders.

When he entered the office, there was Mr. Peck at his desk. Morgan gave his old partner a cold look, but said never a word.

"Just came down to see about my mail," Mr. Peck muttered, somewhat abashed, but gruffly.

Morgan did not answer. He wrote a cheque for five hundred dollars, the amount of the entrance fee to the Cup race, and dictated a letter to the Cup Race Committee.

When the stenographer had gone out Mr. Peck scowled over at Morgan.

"So you're going in for that fool race," he sneered.

"It seems so," Morgan said quietly. He went to a closet and was soon in greasy overalls and jumper.

"Where'd you get that money?" demanded Mr. Peck, as Morgan moved towards the door leading into the factory.

"That, sir, I believe, is none of your business."

Mr. Peck's face reddened.

"D'you think I'd sell out for a measly two thousand, and that two thousand a note that ain't worth a postage stamp?"

"I don't think anything about it—I know you did."

And Morgan walked into the factory.

That day the building of the racer began. The big race was at the end of September; this was the end of June—three months in which to build the machine, tune it up and become its master. The frame and the many other parts of their fifty horse-power touring car could be used; but the engine—Morgan had decided it should be ninety horse-power—had to be made entirely new, and likewise all the parts of the driving gear.

There was plenty of work for the half dozen very skilful men he had selected to help him, for every part had to be made with infinite care, tested with infinite care, and fitted to its place with infinite care. For all the heartache in him, Morgan enjoyed these days of the car's growing. It was a long untasted pleasure to work in freedom from the domineering methods of Mr. Peck—though that gentleman continued coming to the factory daily.

By the first of September it was done—a long, squat, dingy creature, whose lean lines suggested the athlete trained to supremest fitness. At the very break of each morning Morgan was on the roads about Milford, testing his creation. He did not care to let it show its speed upon the public highways, even though at dawn they were deserted, but at forty miles an hour every part worked easily and the car boomed along without the faintest show of effort. Morgan was delighted, for his sparking device, on which he had chiefly counted for the commercial success of the Peck car, and on which he now chiefly counted for success in the race, was getting the very best work out of the cylinders.

His mechanic, Jack Henderson, the best workman in the Peck and Morgan shop, though hardly more than a boy, was equally enthusiastic.

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"We'll show 'em what we're made of," he said.

They were eventually back at seven o'clock, but on the day they were to leave Milford for the race-course they had much tyre trouble on their morning run, and it was ten o'clock before they rolled through the town.

The turn of a corner showed a touring car approaching, and in it Mr. Peck and his daughter. At sight of Miss Peck—he had not seen her during the two months—Morgan choked and almost lost control of the racer. Miss Peck, her face very white and set, looked steadily at him till he lifted his be-goggled cap, then turned her stare upon the shop-windows. Morgan's face flamed, and he looked straight ahead.

Three days later they were settled in their garage, with enough spare parts to build another machine, and the two weeks before them in which to become acquainted with the course. At the drawing to fix the order in which the twenty contesting machines were to start in the race, nineteenth place fell to Morgan, and nineteen was painted on the front, sides and back of his car in white figures two feet high.

The first morning he had the racer out for practice he was content to take things easy round the thirty-mile course, which on the day of the race had to be circled ten times, but the second morning he let her out on the last round, with Henderson keeping time.

"Thirty-three minutes," Jack announced, as the car flashed past the grand stand at the finish. "That's what I call going."

"Going!" agreed Morgan, "but, man! —when she really goes!"

* * * * *

It was the day of the race. While the heaven was still lighted only by the stars, the roads leading to the course were processioned by thousands of glare-eyed touring cars, and the New York trains were adding tens of thousands to those who had spent the night in barns, tents and the open fields along the way.

Five o'clock found Morgan's and the nineteen other racing machines in a waiting line before the grand stand. Each car's manufacturer stood beside his machine talking to its driver, and giving him encouraging pats on the back, and friends were coming up to shake the driver's hand and wish him victory, while here and there handkerchiefs were being waved from the grand stand.

Morgan gave a quick, hungry glance at this great inclined plane of humanity, then returned his eyes to their former straight-ahead gaze; he had expected no friend, and he had seen no friend. Few persons had ever heard of the "king of the automobile world," and the few had wondered at its maker's temerity in entering it in any race at all, let alone such a race as this.

"We don't seem to be exactly the favourite, do we, Jack?" Morgan said drily.

"I guess there ain't many in this bunch bettin' even money we'll win."

"No; about a million to one is the odds."

Morgan's left hand came from the wheel and gripped Jack's arm.

"But we've got to win, anyhow!" he said fiercely. "Understand!"

"We'll win—if she only sticks together," Jack assured him grimly; "for, oh Lord, she's got speed to give away!"

There was a stir among the group of officials at the head of the line of machinery; half-past five, the hour of starting, was but three minutes off.

"Clear the course!" rang out an order.

It was taken up by hundreds of voices and moved down the track in a great billow of sound, and the crowd which had blackened the road parted, leaving between a brown ribbon of oiled earth. The next minute the engine of the car No. 1 began booming and spitting from both sides of its bonnet darts of blue flame. The starters counted off the seconds, and at "Go!" the car lugged forward. A great cheer rose from the grand stand and kept pace with the car as it whizzed between the lines of bordering thousands.

The first fifteen cars, cheer-followed, had gone flying at minute intervals towards the flushing east, when Jack suddenly seized Morgan's arm.

"Somebody wants you," he said, and nodded towards a box in the grand stand.

In the box, one in the lowest tier, Morgan saw a girl in a long tan coat. She smiled, and a gloved hand beckoned to him. Instantly he was out of the car and beneath the box, touching his begoggled leathern skull-cap that was tied beneath his chin.

She leant over the railing till her head was on a level with his, in order that her voic might be heard above the terrific fusillade No. 16 had just begun.

"So you were not going to speak to a friend?" she demanded.

"A friend?" he said dizzily, touching his cap to her aunt and uncle in the rear of the box. "I didn't know you were here. And I didn't know you were my friend."

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"Not your friend?" Her eyebrows arched with surprise. "Though I suppose I shouldn't be after the way you've treated me."

"The way I've treated you!" gasped Morgan, as No. 16 roared away.

"Yes." Her face became severe. "Think of how you served me on the telephone. I held the receiver till my arm ached, calling to you, waiting for you to say something more—but you'd cut me off. And then you haven't come near me for three months."

He could only stammer and stare.

A dazzling smile drove the severity from her face.

"But see how I have forgiven you. I've stayed up all night and come here just to see you win."

"You want me to win?" he cried.

"Yes," she said, and her face grew very steady and she held out a little gloved hand.

He showed his grimy palm and shook his head. She leant further over and the little hand slipped into the palm. He gripped it tightly.

The hand withdrew, fell upon his shoulder, and gave him a light push.

"You must go; your mechanic is getting frantic."

Morgan touched his cap and sprang to his seat just as No. 17 shot across the tape.

"Jack," he said between his teeth, "I'll bet a million to one we'll win!"

As No. 18 rolled up to the tape, the grand stand burst into cheering and clapping of hands. No. 18 was easily the favourite. It was made by a famous firm, and had won several smaller races during the summer, and had made a good show in France in the Gordon-Bennett Cup Race. Its driver, Peary, was skilful and reckless; and though he habitually disregarded the rights of other drivers, this affected him little with the public, which sees only results and judges by them. As he bolted away, Peary responded to the applause with a jaunty wave of a gauntleted hand.

Nineteen was next.

The grand stand looked on listlessly; she was the nobody of the race. Jack cranked the engine, which started going with the din of a quick-firing gun, and leapt in. Morgan pulled his goggles down over his eyes, and sat tensely waiting, while the starters, who shared the grand stand's opinion of Nineteen, perfunctorily shouted the seconds into his ears:

"*Fifteen—ten—five—four—three,*" he turned his head and had a glimpse of a smiling figure leaning over a box railing—"*two—one—go!*"

The car moved easily away from the silent grand stand—silent save for one pair of clapping hands. He changed to the high gear, the car fairly sprang into sprinting speed, and flashed away down the oiled road—and the race that was to mean everything or nothing to Morgan was on.

To keep your machine in the road, and to keep it going at eighty miles an hour on the straight, and at forty miles on the turns—that's the substance of driving a racer, barring mishaps. And that was the substance of Morgan's first round. He crept up to within a mile of Eighteen, and was holding that position when he skimmed past the grand stand. The grand stand was a blur to him, but the corner of his eye caught the waving of a single handkerchief.

"Thirty minutes!" Jack announced. "Great!"

Morgan nodded, his eyes on the oiled railway.

A few miles on Peary had a puncture in his rear tyre, and stopped in the very middle of the road to repair it. It was such breaches of racing etiquette as this that made him so cordially detested by other drivers. Morgan, tearing on behind, had to slow down and run almost off the course to get by. The slow-down cost him a quarter of a minute; and three-hundred mile races are sometimes won by little more.

A little further on Morgan himself had a rear tyre punctured. He stopped at the next tyre station and had it replaced, and was starting off again, after a loss of three minutes, when Peary came whizzing by. Morgan set out in grim pursuit, and gradually closed the gap between them. When thirty yards behind, he sounded his horn for Peary to give him half the road, but Peary, despite the rule that a machine being overtaken must keep to the right, held the middle of the course.

They ran so for a mile, then the way broadened, and Morgan touched his accelerator. Nineteen responded, like a horse to a whip, darted forward, swung round Eighteen, and again took the middle of the road. When they flashed by the grand stand Eighteen was a mile behind.

The next four rounds were wild speeding. Nineteen ran as though she knew the stake she carried. She passed car after car, always ready with bursts of swifter flight when asked of her, as tireless as speed in the abstract.

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Going at eighty miles an hour on the straight, and at forty miles on the turns.

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She swept by cars that stood beside the course with cracked cylinders and broken frames; and at one turn she passed a heap of shattered steel; and the wheel-ploughed roadside and splintered telephone pole told that machine's story. But Nineteen refused to shy from the course; her parts had the strength that comes from perfect making, and she rushed on with the speed of thought.

Her third run was done in twenty-nine minutes. The grand stand began to be interested. The fourth round in the same—a slight cheer came from the stand. The fifth round in the same—a louder cheer. The sixth round Nineteen came by in twenty-seven minutes, leading the next machine, Peary's, by more than half-a-lap. A roar went up from the grand stand so great that it drowned to Morgan's ears the terrific artillery of his flying car, and the roar thundered along the parallel human walls through which he sped. Nineteen had become the favourite.

Suddenly, as she whizzed on, there was an explosion, and the car began to bump. A rear tyre had burst. Morgan kept her going with hardly any decrease in speed till the first tyre station was reached.

"Change 'em all!" he shouted as he drew up on the green space before the tent; an entire new set should last through the race. He and Jack tumbled their stiff bodies out of the car, and a dozen men fell upon the wheels like skilful demons.

Five minutes after the car stopped she was dashing on again. It was nine o'clock now, and appetite, dulled by excitement at their four o'clock breakfast, was beginning to take on a keen edge. Jack broke up a cake of chocolate in his grimy hands and pushed pieces into Morgan's mouth. Morgan munched and swallowed, and Jack pushed in more; but Morgan's eyes never left the greasy ribbon of road.

On, on the car sped, increasing her lead every mile over Eighteen, which still held second place. Near the end of the ninth round they saw Peary less than a mile ahead—a lead of a lap on their nearest rival!

"One more round!" Morgan cried exultantly.

Jack hugged his left arm.

When they turned into the straight stretch that passed the grand stand, Peary was but a hundred yards or two ahead, and a few lengths beyond was No. 7, hopelessly out of the race from an hour's delay, but running now bravely.

Peary, a notorious player to the grand stand, saw here a chance for a bit of the spectacular. As he and No. 7 drew up to the stand, he blew for passage-way, and touched his accelerator. His car sprinted forward, but Peary, always a reckless driver, cut the curve of passing too fine; perhaps he had expected more of the road. The hub of his right fore wheel smashed against the left rear wheel of No. 7. There was an explosion and a crash. Eighteen skidded on one side from the impact, and rushed on, unharmed. But Seven, a wheel splintered, the end of an axle on the ground, was left lugging wildly about like a wounded beast.

Between this disaster and the next the crowd had time for only a gasping cry of horror. Morgan was gripped by the terror of instant-away death. He threw out the clutch and jammed on the brakes. But there was no stopping this roaring thunderbolt in a hundred yards, and no steering around that crippled, flopping machine ahead.

The two cars crashed.

A figure shot over the bonnet of Nineteen, like a diver from his spring-board, and rolled over and over in the road and lay very still. The two machines seemed to writhe for an instant, as though in gigantic enmity—their engines bombarding muzzle to muzzle. Then they swung apart—No. 7 to become a wreck against the grand stand—No. 19 to go lurching forward upon one fore wheel and the end of an axle, grazing the prostrate body in the road.

The grand stand breathed. They had expected annihilation. But Morgan, in the last thousandth part of a second, had swerved his machine so that his left fore wheel had met, and not in direct impact, a wheel of No. 7. The crowd saw that the two men in No. 7 were living, and saw that the man in the steering of Nineteen still held his seat.

Morgan, whose grip on the wheel and supreme bracing of the legs had saved him from being a catapultic missile, leapt from the car and ran back to where Jack lay. He knelt and jerked off Jack's goggles. The boy weakly opened his eyes.

"All gone to smash?" he asked.

"How are you?" Morgan cried.

Jack began slowly to rise. Morgan waited for no more. He rushed to Nineteen, which officials were frantically pushing from the track, for the announcer's megaphone had sounded the call:

"Car coming!"

They lodged her against the grand stand—beneath a box wherein sat a girl in a tan coat, and the instant the car stopped Morgan

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wriggled under it, and to the crowd was only a V of legs. Jack limped dazedly up, and at the sight of the battered bonnet and radiator, the splintered hub that had been a fore wheel, the race that was lost, the boy leant his elbows over his old seat and broke into sobs. In this he was not alone, for just above him a girl in a tan coat was sobbing too.

Morgan began to wriggle out, and Jack, face streaming, caught his ankles, and dragged him forth. He sprang up frantically, his grimy face likewise tear-streaked.

"How is it?" Jack asked.

"Seems solid—front axle bent a little." He pointed a quivering hand at the hub. "Get it off—jack up the axle!"

"Why—what for?" Jack asked blankly.

"Hang it! Get it off!" he yelled. And he turned and sprinted in the direction of the garage—why, only his frenzy could have told, for the garage was four miles away.

But the sight of one of the motor-cycle patrolmen brought him to a stop. Without a word, he snatched the motor-cycle from the owner's hands, and gave a run and leapt astride it. It was a high-power machine, with a mile-a-minute reputation. Whatever its best was, it showed that best now.

In a dozen seconds Morgan was a whizzing speck down the roadway, the tails of his yellow dustcoat whipping the air. The crowd, oblivious of the cars racing past, stood on its feet and watched him disappear, and then counted the minutes till he should come again. They guessed what he was going to try to do. Could he do it in time?—and would the car run?

* * * * *

Presently the speck reappeared far down the roadway—grew larger as it skimmed towards them—and then they saw a great hump on Morgan's back—and then as he dashed up to the grand stand they saw that the hump was a wheel, its tyre inflated. He sprang from the motor-cycle, gave it a push towards its owner, and instantly Jack was unstrapping the wheel from his back. The next instant the two of them were fitting it to its place.

But before the task was done the announcer's shout went up, "Car coming!"—and two minutes later No. 18 tore by and began its tenth round. More than another two minutes were gone ere the last thing was finished. Then Morgan leapt to his seat, and Jack began to crank the engine. Would the engine run? the grand stand asked itself. The engine answered with a mighty booming.

A hand fell on Morgan's shoulder—a hand in a soiled glove. He looked up at a figure that leant out over the box railing.

"You're going to win!" said a choking voice.

His face tightened—that was all.

Jack bounded to his seat. Morgan let in the clutch. The car moved! A great cry of relief rose from the grand stand, and changed to a cheer as the car fairly sprang into a leaping speed. Theirs was a brave try! but could man born of woman, and machine made of man, overcome the three minutes' lead of Eighteen?

Could they? If man and machine could, Morgan and Nineteen would. For the first minute he was full of fear that the spirit had been knocked out of her. But her cylinders fired with their old regularity; all her parts ran with their old ease. He called for her best, and she gave it loyally. Faster, faster she went—swaying, lurching, pulsing giantly. The gale of her making swept over the bonnet and struck her riders' faces like blows. And still she went faster, as though she had the infinite speed of flying worlds.

"Ninety miles an hour—if we're moving at all!" gasped Jack.

Morgan did not answer. He did not hear.

There were only two things in the world—that ribbon of oiled road, which his eyes dared not leave, and this throbbing, whirling machine, with its terrible, magnificent, unconquerable soul of fire.

Could they do it?

A hundred thousand people wanted them to—pressed on their flight with their hearts' best wishes. In the grand stand all eyes were fixed at the beginning of the final stretch; cars thundered by all unnoted. The crowd sat with watch in hand, counting off the minutes since Nineteen had started—twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three—

"Car coming!" shouted the announcer.

A tiny blot flashed into view. Eighteen or Nineteen? All eyes strained for the figures on the car's front as she came forward like a meteor. The number began to appear—the first figure was a one, the second eight or nine—eye could not tell which.

The car dipped down a grade and was lost to sight. The heart of the crowd stood still. She flashed up into view again, and there was her number before all—Nineteen!

The next instant she roared by, two tense, crouching figures in her lap, the very soul, the very body of Speed itself. And the

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grand stand, on its feet, roared back at her. And a little girl in a tan coat let her head fall forward upon her folded arms.

* * * *

It was the next morning. Mr. Peck, sitting at his old desk in the office of Peck and Morgan, pushed away a heap of open letters, and took up again one of the half dozen New York papers before him. There was but one thing in the papers, and that was the automobile race, and there was but one thing in the automobile race, and that was the wonderful running of Nineteen and the wonderful driving of Morgan.

Mr. Peck clenched his jaws very tightly and scowled very heavily, but his mouth twitched and his eyes blinked, and he read every word in each paper.

Shortly after eleven o'clock the office door opened and Morgan walked in, in automobile coat and begoggled cap, having just driven out from New York. He looked thin and pale, and his eyes were bloodshot from the strain of yesterday. He stared at Mr. Peck and at the heap of open letters, then walked sharply forward.

"Pardon me, sir, I should like to know what business you have to open my mail?" he demanded.

Mr. Peck did not reply at once, and when he did speak did not answer the question. Without looking up, he jerked a pudgy thumb towards the heap of letters that lay on the desk.

"Thirty-seven orders there," he said gruffly.

"They haven't had a chance to come in—there'll be a hundred to-morrow," Morgan could not refrain from answering. "I have twenty with me." His face grew sharp again.

"What right, sir, have you in my mail?" he asked.

Mr. Peck again jerked his thumb towards the heap of orders.

"Mr. Morgan, don't be silly—you need money to push them through. How much do you want?"

"None."

Mr. Peck looked up at the pale face of the young man.

"None? None? What do you mean?" His jaw fell.

"You know Mr. Tucker has been wanting to branch out into the automobile business," Morgan quietly explained. "He's offered me two hundred thousand for what I bought of you."

Mr. Peck rose weakly up.

"You've—sold—my—stock?" he gasped.

"*My* stock," Morgan corrected him very calmly.

"You've sold it?"

"I have the offer."

Mr. Peck's right fist came up and shook tremulously in Morgan's face.

"Young man, if you sell that stock away from me, I'll—I'll—well, it's an easy guess, you've still got an eye on my daughter. You sell that stock—and to Tucker!—and you'll never say a word to her again!"

"That brings up another point," Morgan said with the same quietness. He turned to his own desk, threw it open, and scribbled a note; he then touched a button and handed the note to the answering boy, with the direction:

"In the touring-car out in front."

Morgan wheeled about and looked steadily at Mr. Peck.

Mr. Peck sank into his chair and glared back, and for a minute or more there was silence.

Then the door opened.

Mr. Peck looked round, and Morgan rose and took off his cap. There stood Miss Peck, in an automobile coat, her veil drawn above her face, which was very fresh and very pink. An impartial judge would have declared that she was very pretty.

"Why, hello!" Mr. Peck exclaimed, "I thought you were in New York with your aunt."

"I just came back. I—I wanted to see you," she said, growing a little pinker, and if possible a little prettier.

"Can't talk to you now; I'm busy. You'll have to wait outside."

"Don't go, please," Morgan said quickly. "Your father has surmised, pardon me for repeating it, that I—I am attracted towards you. And he has said that unless I let him have back his stock, you'll never have a word to say to me."

"And I mean it!" Mr. Peck's face purpled and his fist slammed upon his desk. "What I tell her to do, my daughter does. I ordered her three months ago to have nothing to do with you—and has she, eh? I guess not. It'll be the same in the future. You remember that!"

"Does the inverse of your threat hold good?" Morgan queried. "If I let you have back the stock, then you'll have no objection——"

Mr. Peck dismissed the point with a wave of his hand.

"Then I step out. It'll be between you two."

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sir, for the same amount of stock as I had before—fifty-one per cent."

"Forty-nine," said Morgan.

The young man's face was determined, masterful.

Mr. Peck saw that the day of his control was gone. He scowled into his desk a minute.

"Well, let it go at that."

There was a moment's pause; then he took his hat from the top of his desk and rose.

"I guess I'd better be going," he said, with a knowing look, "so that a couple of young people can make their peace."

The hump was a wheel, its tyre inflated.

Morgan looked at Miss Peck. She met his glance with a blush. He turned back to her father.

"You'll put up cash?"

"Yes. Um—how much?"

"Two hundred thousand."

"One hundred and fifty."

"Two hundred thousand is Tucker's offer. I can't take less."

Mr. Peck stared at the set face.

"All right," he growled. A cunning look came into his eyes. "But remember, my dear

"You needn't bother," said Morgan. "We've made it."

He stepped to Miss Peck's side and drew her hand through his arm. Her face was aflame and his own suddenly flushed.

"The Reverend Doctor Thorndyke acted as peacemaker," he said.

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The winner of the First Prize—a handsome cup, which is seen at the left of the picture.

BABY'S PARADE

A Procession of Children in Decorated Carriages, which Takes Place Annually at Asbury Park, near New York City.

By F. A. Talbot.

Within easy reach of the hum and bustle of New York City, on the New Jersey shore, is the popular seaside and suburban retreat of Asbury Park, which is to the jaded business man of America's premier city what Brighton is to the Londoner. It is a picturesque, healthy, and bracing resort, and during the summer months, when the heat in the city is unbearable, it affords a pleasant social spot where one may obtain relief from the turmoil of commerce.

To the New York business man a sojourn at the "Queen-City-by-the-Sea," as it is popularly called, acts as a veritable tonic. There is such a kaleidoscope of amusement and entertainment that one is never able to pause and think of business, while monotony is unknown. By the younger generation more particularly, a visit to the resort is anticipated with the keenest enthusiasm, especially to participate in the annual "Baby's Parade."

This carnival is inseparable from Asbury Park, since without it the town would be very dull for the children, and it has now become an indispensable institution. In fact, "Baby's Parade" and Asbury Park are synonymous, and its fame has spread throughout the length and breadth of the continent, while it has no rival either in the States or any other country. Nor, for the matter of that, can such an attractive festival be witnessed in any spot where carnivals prevail.

This unique institution was first inaugurated some fifteen years ago. It was quite a humble festival at first, in which only a few visitors participated, but the popularity with which it was received during the progress of years, and the gigantic proportions it has now assumed, render it the premier function of the year, and one in which everyone takes part enthusiastically.

Now over five hundred little tots join in the carnival, and a glance over the programme, which, in keeping with the occasion, is an elaborate production, will show that the contestants hail from every part of the great American continent, literally from the Falkland Islands to Labrador.

The competitors are of all ages and sizes, from little cooing things six months old to children of the more mature age of twelve or fourteen years.

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This elaborate carnival, which is the most prominent, and final, social function of the season, is celebrated in the last week of August, and extends over five days, when the whole place is given up to revelry and gaiety.

The entire population, whether residents, or guests paying flying visits to the hotels, joins in the fun. The town is lavishly decorated with bunting, flags, and flowers, while at night it is transformed into a veritable fairyland, with myriads of illuminations of all colours and devices, and firework displays.

The three first nights are devoted to masque dances and similar amusements, organised in honour of Titania, Queen of the Fairies, and her elaborate Court. The whole of the hotels are thrown open for this feast of merriment and joy.

"Only a Daisy." A simple yet very effective design.

The "Baby's Parade," which is the most imposing ceremony, is celebrated on the Thursday, and the festivities are brought to a conclusion the following night by a Carnival de Venice on an extensive lake, in which hundreds of brilliantly decorated craft of all designs and types take part.

The carnival is inaugurated by the election of the Queen and her Court. This ceremony completed, the invitations to the extensive round of dances and the Court reception are issued. The invitations are of a most ornate description, being attractively prepared in colours and gold.

The reception itself is in every way a replica of those obtaining at Imperial Courts, with all their attendant ceremony and dignity. Expense is not studied in any way. The Royal chamber is a bower of flowers, palms, and lights, while the effect of the scene is enhanced by the elaborate toilettes of the ladies and sombre evening dress of the gentlemen.

"Keep off the Grass." This costume was probably suggested by Miss Gertie Millar's famous song in *The Toreador*.

The Royal decree, signed by Titania Regina, is then published. It runs as follows:

"I, Titania, consort of Oberon, Queen of the Fairies, since that distant day when the earth ceased to be without form and void, realising that the days of carnival are near at hand, send greetings to the Infant Republic at Asbury Park, which has again invited me to reign over the realm where the babe is king. That allegiance which is due to your Queen I do not demand, for love is the sceptre with which I rule, and neither fairy nor mortal doth rebel against love's sweet sway. Listen then to the proclamation of your Sovereign Queen:

"Fairies, I command you, rebuild the castles of childhood, create anew a wonderland of romance, take mortals into a world where the pit-pat of chubby, pink hands, and the patter-patter of rosy, naked feet, and the laughing merriment of baby days, are again to be heard. To the childless make the

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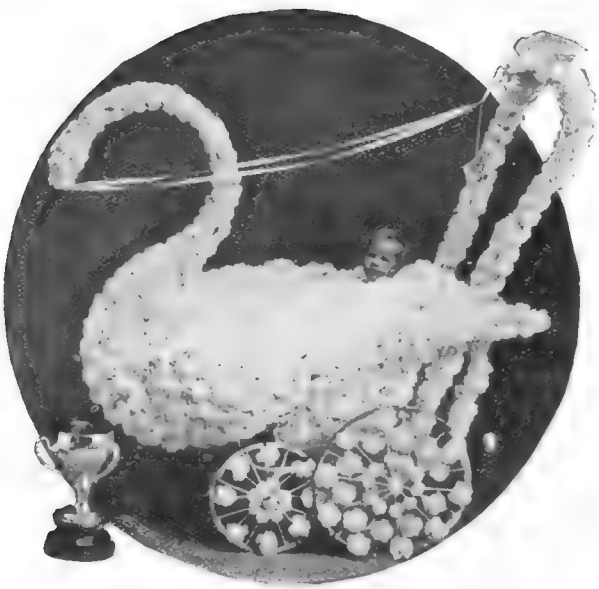

Another prize-winner. This pretty child is riding on the back of a swan. The reins of the bird are held by a dove perched on the handle of the carriage.

consolation of memory to smile through the clouds of sorrow so that it may tinge the dark of life with the roseate hues of home and Heaven."

Then are set forth in the quaint phraseology characteristic of Royal proclamations the various events that are to be celebrated during the coming week.

"Baby's Parade" is attended by a large influx of visitors from all the surrounding suburban resorts near New York on the New Jersey coast, who flock to pay homage to "His Majesty the Baby." The unique spectacle is witnessed by several thousand persons who thickly line each side of the course. On one side of the central point of the promenade is built a raised daïs, commanding a wide, uninterrupted view of the parade, and on the throne provided sits Titania the Queen, supported by her maids of honour and retinue of escorts in full regalia.

Opposite is arranged an enormous grand stand, capable of seating several thousand people, and practically lining one side of the promenade along which the competing children pass. It is scarcely necessary to add that the capacity of this accommodation is always taxed to the utmost.

The parade itself is carried out upon a most elaborate scale. Owing to the number of entrants on the last occasion—over five hundred children competed—the entries are now divided into a number of classes, by which arrangement the work of the judges is facilitated considerably, though in view of the gorgeous scheme of decoration adopted it is by no means an easy task to select the prize-winners.

The schemes of decoration devised by the parents of the competing children are most attractive, quaint, and novel in character. The various vehicles in which the mites are carried are completely enveloped in flowers or bunting.

The variety is infinite. A gorgeous bower of white roses, in which the child can scarcely be seen, is followed by a quaint conception of a huge daisy, the little child peeping its head wonderingly from the heart of the blossom, and surrounded by the pure white petals of the flower, while the illusion is further enhanced by the juvenile carriage being hauled by a realistic

A small cyclist who is supposed to be taking messages for Cupid.

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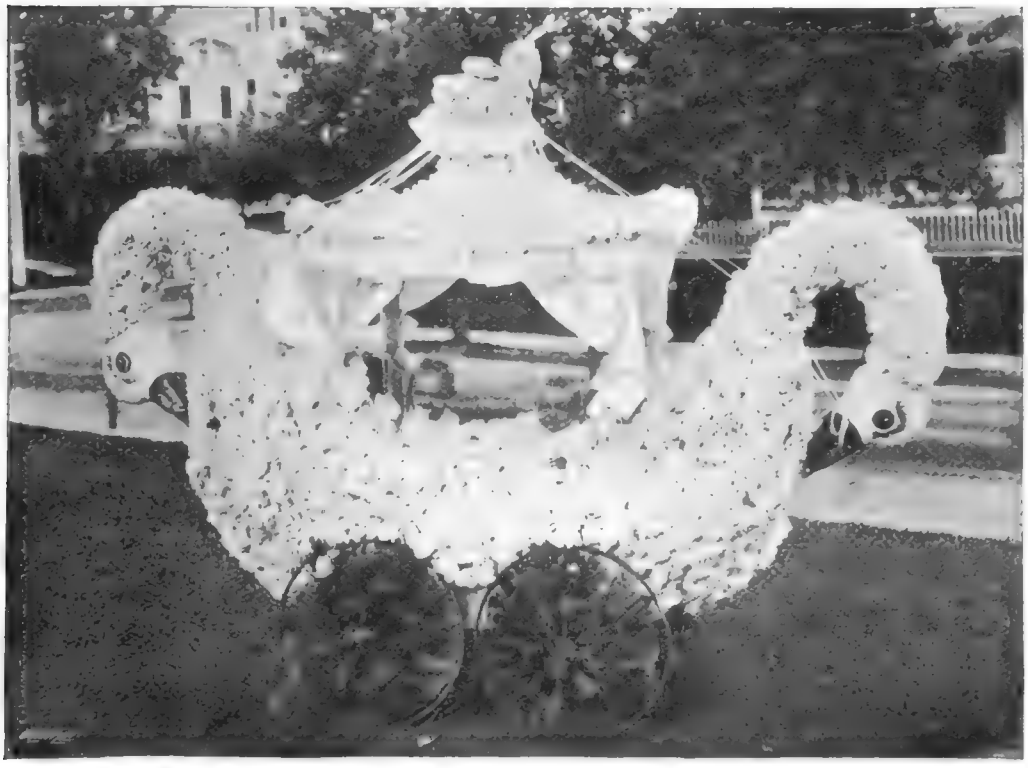
stem and leaves. Then comes a huge swan on wheels, a mass of white blooms, with the white silk reins held in the beak of a dove, the prevailing mass of white presenting a pretty spectacle of almost dazzling brilliancy in the powerful and clear autumn sunlight.

Novelty is adequately provided, and in this direction considerable ingenuity is displayed. In one case a child of some six or seven summers was arrayed in the familiar garb of the Italian organ-grinder, and trudged along merrily with a hurdy-gurdy, mounted on its single stick support, and accompanied by two stuffed monkeys, turning the handle with great gusto.

One diminutive being attired in a bathing costume presented a humorous spectacle mounted in his crude carriage enveloped in seaweed, while another child walked majestically along in great glee in her dress and hat made of grass.

In keeping with the nature of the parade, the prizes are of a most elaborate and prolific nature. Each child is presented with a jeweled memento of the occasion, even if an award is secured. In this direction the organisers of the function are liberally supported by the wealthy residents of the surrounding towns. The premier prizes are massive in size, and many of the larger loving cups cost so much as £30 apiece, wrought in silver and suitably inscribed. Awards are liberally presented, and even the fifth prizes in each division comprise small silver loving cups. It would appear as if the respective donors vie with one another in paying homage to the child; at any rate it must be conceded that they do everything in their power to render the parade an unqualified success, and provide a spectacle which, as a social function, is unrivaled in any part of the world, even in those countries where the carnival has been brought to a high standard of perfection. Certain it is, however, that the inauguration of such a festival where His Majesty the Baby reigns supreme is novel in character, and one that appeals to all.

The following night the week of festivity is brought to a conclusion by an aquatic festival. With the break of dawn the festivities close, and carnival has ceased to prevail. At the same time the closing of the ceremonies indicates the end of the season at this resort, and the visitors hasten to warmer climes.



"Twins." The decoration of this carriage with its twin swans admirably illustrates the title of the design.

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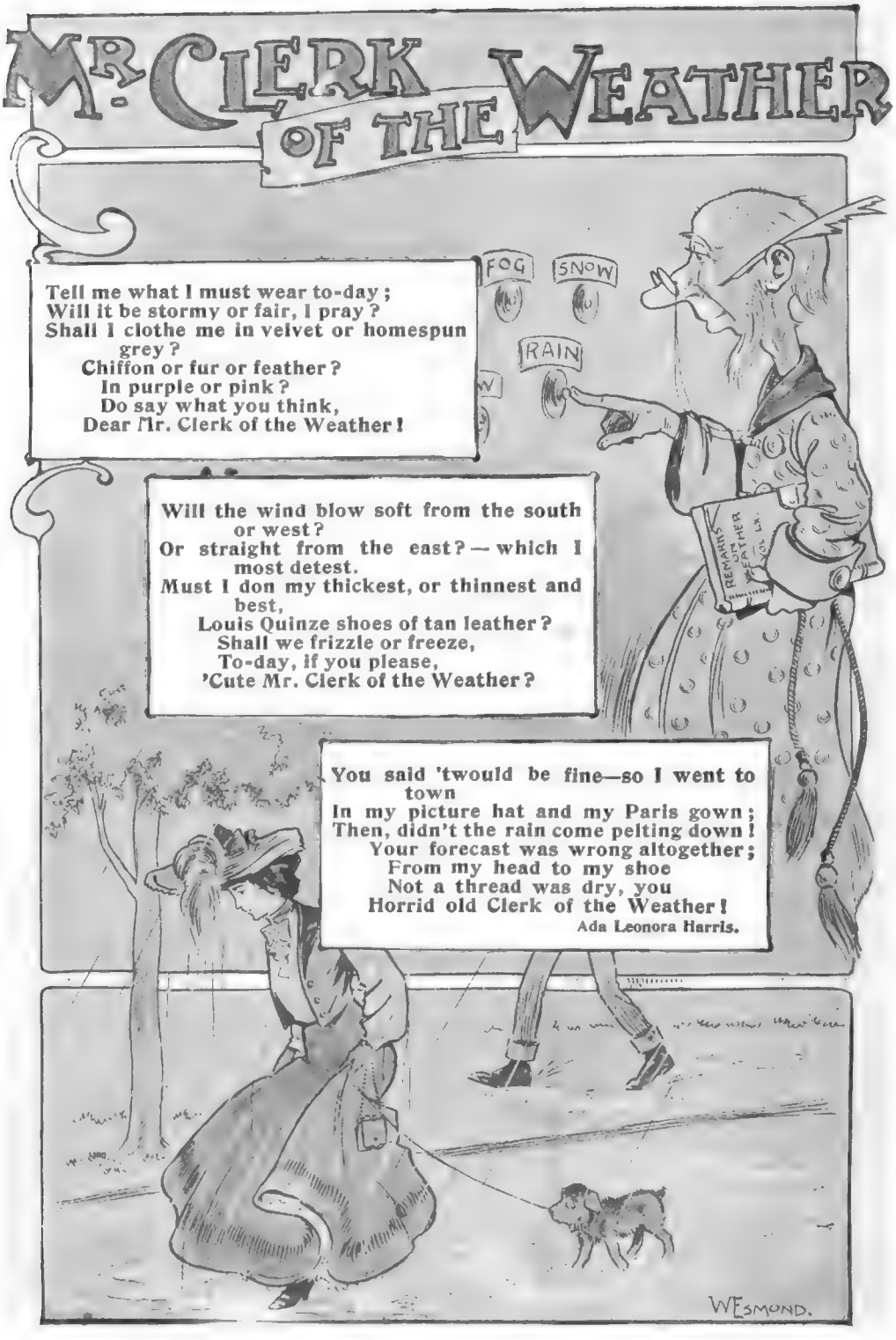
Mr. Clerk of the Weather



Tell me what I must wear to-day;
Will it be stormy or fair, I pray?
Shall I clothe me in velvet or homespun grey?
Chiffon or fur or feather?
In purple or pink?
Do say what you think,
Dear Mr. Clerk of the Weather!

Will the wind blow soft from the south or west?
Or straight from the east? — which I most detest.
Must I don my thickest, or thinnest and best,
Louis Quinze shoes of tan leather?
Shall we frizzle or freeze,
To-day, if you please,
'Cute Mr. Clerk of the Weather?

You said 'twould be fine—so I went to town
In my picture hat and my Paris gown;
Then, didn't the rain come pelting down!
Your forecast was wrong altogether;
From my head to my shoe
Not a thread was dry, you
Horrid old Clerk of the Weather!

Ada Leonora Harris.

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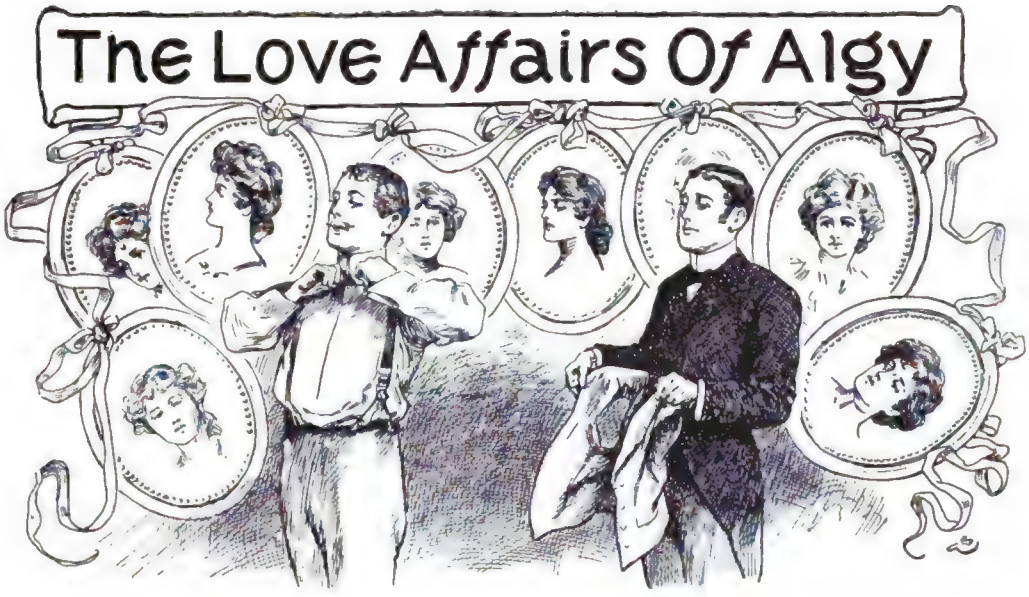
The Love Affairs Of Algy



This is the Second of a Series of Stories, Each Complete in Itself, Describing the Flirtations of the Hon. Algernon Marmaduke Brightlingsea.

No. II.—HIS AUGUST GIRL: "BACK TO THE LAND."

By Marcus Woodward.

Be it recorded that the Hon. Algy Brightlingsea, when driving his motor-car on a summer's afternoon across a precipitous wooded valley in the wilds of Sussex, was so unfortunate as to be brought to a sudden stop by a breakdown of machinery—Algy being at the time on his way from London on a visit to his sister's country house.

Half-an-hour, passed on the part of Algy and his chauffeur mainly on the ground, full length beneath the car, saw no improvement in matters, and left man and master not only in bad tempers, but as dirty as coal-miners. Another half hour saw the chauffeur setting off for London by train in search of a new part to replace that damaged; while Algy, with his man Deeds, superintended the harnessing of a farm-horse to the helpless motor, and its removal to an empty barn by the roadside.

"Now," said Algy, this accomplished, "we have five or six hours before us at the least, Deeds, with nothing to do but kick our heels and study rural life. What can you propose for amusement?"

Deeds, ever hopeful, was full of suggestions. It was charming country, he pointed out, and one might have been stranded in a worse place; on a fine, bright afternoon, such as it was, one might enjoy a stroll through the fields; or there was a farmhouse, noted in passing, a little distance up the road, where a real country tea might, with diplomacy, be obtained.

"That," said Algy, "is a great idea, and I shall at once prospect." And he set off to seek the farmhouse and such entertainment as might befall.

The fair Sussex valley Algy found to his liking. The view was superb—and he stood for awhile to trace the white road on its winding way towards distant hills. And so full of peace and delight were the country sights and sounds, that when he reached a gate by the roadside, he decided to sit thereon, and give himself up to the silent contemplation of Nature.

Engaged in this praiseworthy pursuit, Algy, on his gate-top, failed to notice that a pair of merry brown eyes were occupied at close quarters in taking in every detail of his personality. The brown eyes regarded him with no small amusement, and indeed the situation was not without piquancy, for their owner was perched in the branch of a damson-tree immediately overhead, and had been busy, until Algy approached, in the charming

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pursuit of damson-picking. Of the sex gentle, with sun-tanned face shaded by a large straw hat, clad in a coarse blue overall, and bearing a basket on her left arm, the owner of the brown eyes was perched in the branches with all the assurance of a bird. But of the picture she made, seated there in the tree, Algy was only aroused to consciousness by the fact that a mysterious shower of damsons began, of a sudden, to fall upon him.

"Strange!" he muttered, as a damson rattled down on his motor-cap, and another dashed the monocle from his eye: and he upturned his face to discover the cause. Whereupon there fell a handful of damsons cleanly into his open mouth.

"A thousand pardons," came a voice from the damson tree. "I've upset my basket and dropped all my fruit. I'm *so* sorry if I startled you."

Now in moments of sudden agitation, of stress, or excitement, Algy's power of speech had a trick of deserting him. But never before had such a moment come upon him with his mouth full of damsons. The result of a desperate attempt to utter the simple words of convention, "*Not at all*," was, in these conditions, extraordinary, and not without its effect on the lady in the tree overhead, who seemed in danger of following her damsons to the ground.

"Pray," she said at last, Algy's stuttering showing no signs abatement, "*pray* don't be alarmed."

"N-n-not-at-t-t-tall," said Algy faintly, and clambered down from the gate-top, the better to take in the strange vision above his head.

Then the thought came to him, as he turned his head aloft, that an incredible bit of luck had come his way. There flashed through his mind the idea that he was face to face with that rare bird, so often painted by the artists, so often sung about by the poets, so seldom seen—a genuine country lass.

"Here's the rustic beauty of stageland in real life," mused Algy, "apple-cheeks and all. Here we have a veritable nut-brown maiden of the twentieth century, or the living image of that pretty maid who went a-milking. I'll wager my motor she's a milkmaid—a milkmaid in a damson-tree;" and he screwed his eyeglass in his eye, and said again, "Not at all—*not-at-all*."

"I'm afraid I *did* scare you, though," said the lady of the damson-tree, gathering her skirts about her, and ascending to still greater heights by way of a ladder. "Now I must make up for the damsons I have dropped."

"May I be permitted to assist you?" Algy mounted the gate again, and awaited permission to descend on the other side. "I'm a splendid hand at fruit-picking."

"And so am I," said the lady. "And, thank you, I require no help."

"May I ask," said Algy, sitting again on the gate-top, "are you the farmer's daughter?"

"No, I'm the farmer herself."

"Indeed!" said Algy, "you surprise me. Can you milk cows, and make butter and cream, and plough the fields——"

"And scatter the seed, and reap the harvest, and prune the fruit-trees, and manage the poultry and the pigs?—yes, I can do everything," and the merriest peal of laughter came down from the tree-top. "What can you do?"

"Not much in the farming line, I'm afraid," Algy confessed, "except to pick fruit. I am sure I *could* help you."

"Do you want a job?" The damson-picker had refilled her basket, and now propped herself at ease against the tree-trunk, and looked thoughtfully down on Algy. "Are you out of work, young man?" she inquired kindly.

Algy, at this, lost again his power of speech.

"Heavens!" he thought, "she mistakes me for an out-of-work tramp." And then, sitting as he was under the scrutiny of the brown eyes, the reason why flashed upon him. He remembered that cleanliness and smartness of appearance were not, at that moment, his strong points. He was, indeed, in a disgraceful state of dirt, from head to heel. Black oil marks ran in smears across his face, his hands were like a nigger's, his light motor-coat was streaked with grease and white with road-dust.

"Because," sweetly went on the voice in the damson-tree, "if you are out of work and want a job, I *might* be able to give you one."

Still Algy had no word to answer. Overwhelmed by the thought that he, the Honourable Algernon Marmaduke Brightlingsea, should be mistaken for a common, out-of-work tramp, and, forsooth, by a country wench picking damsons, a mere milkmaid in a blue smock—Algy could only feebly splutter in impotent incoherence.

"I don't suppose you would be of much use," went on the voice in the tree, while the brown eyes still thoughtfully wandered up and down Algy's disheveled figure; "but as we are

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busy just now, what with a late hay-crop to be carried, and fruit to be picked, I daresay we could find you *something* to do, and I'm sure," went on the quiet voice, dropping to an undertone, "I'm sure you would be glad of it—*poor fellow!*"

In the supreme moments of life, when the mind totters beneath the strain of an acute crisis, Nature sometimes comes to the rescue of her feeble children with the flash of a brilliant idea. So it was with Algy, when the half-whispered words, "*Poor fellow!*" reached his ears. An idea came to him. He would accept the situation. Adventure he had sought, and adventure he had gained. He would become a farm-hand, for better or for worse. At least the milkmaid was pretty. And with this idea Algy became sane again; his wits returned, and with his wits his speech.

"Madam," he said quite coolly, "I am deeply obliged to you, and I gladly avail myself of your kind offer. I have, indeed, at the present moment, nothing in the world to do."

A mysterious shower of damsons began, of a sudden, to fall upon him.

The lady came down from the tree, and thereupon, without more ado, engaged Algy as odd-job man at Damson-Tree Farm, on the understanding that he would be ready for work by seven o'clock on the following morning. A few minutes of questions and answers—among them a hinted query as to whether Algy had enough means to secure a night's lodging, and a suggestion that he should put up at the village, not a mile distant—and then Algy, not a little to his dismay, found himself left alone, while a dainty figure in a blue smock tripped swiftly away through the trees of the orchard.

* * * * *

Algy remembered that he was still no nearer to the good country tea that his man Deeds had suggested. He therefore went in search of the village. The inn proved a fine old relic of the coaching days, the landlord kindly and hospitable, the tea everything that a country tea should be. Having engaged rooms for the night, and played a game of bowls with his host, Algy then strolled to the village post-office to dispatch telegrams. Here he encountered Deeds, who informed him that he had received a wire from the chauffeur, announcing that he could not return from London with the new part for the damaged motor until the following morning.

Algy was not disconcerted.

"No matter," he said. "The fact is, I have decided to stay the night in the village

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in any event, and probably I shall be engaged until to-morrow afternoon."

Deeds was to have the motor-car brought to the inn so soon as the repairs were accomplished, and there be in readiness, if possible, to start at any time after midday. In the meanwhile, he might amuse himself as he pleased.

"For my part," said Algy to himself, as he retraced his steps to the inn, "I return to the land, and amuse myself with the delusions of the milkmaid."

It was with this thought uppermost in his mind that Algy, after dinner, and a cigar in the garden, retired at an early hour to bed.

* * * * *

Algy, rising with the lark, dressed himself with some care to avoid any appearance of smartness, so that he might the better play the part he had had thrust upon him. This proved somewhat difficult—but by turning back his shirt cuffs, and putting on a quiet suit of dark grey flannels, he satisfied himself that he might easily pass for a young man down on his luck. At half-past six he left the inn, and set out for Damson-Tree Farm, determined to eat his breakfast at the expense of the petticoated farmer.

"And if I don't get a breakfast out of her," he resolved firmly, "I shall throw up the job."

As he entered the farmyard gates, the first object that met his eyes was the farm mistress—a vision in a cotton frock. A cloud of pigeons wheeled and fluttered around her.

"Ah, good morning," she cried gaily. "You see, I am feeding my pets. You have had a good night's rest, I hope?—but how about breakfast?"

"I'm as hungry as your pigeons," Algy confessed.

"Then come to the kitchen, and I'll feed you, too, before we see about work."

"You are very kind," said Algy, and meekly followed his mistress into the house.

On a corner of the kitchen table Algy perceived that a place had already been prepared; and soon a smoking dish of ham and eggs was set before him. He noticed that the hands of the female farmer were small and shapely, though tanned a healthy brown, as she poured him out a cup of coffee, and set a loaf, a dish of butter, and even a pot of home-made marmalade, within his reach.

"I am overwhelmed by your kindness," said Algy. "But before I attack this sumptuous repast—may I inquire the name of my benefactress?"

"My name? Oh, my name is Cranford. But the farm-hands generally call me, for shortness, I suppose, just 'Lady.' You may call me 'Lady,'" she added with a smile—"but now—fall to!—and come to me in the farmyard when you've finished." And she departed, in her abrupt way, thereby shattering the plot that had been maturing in Algy's head to spin out talk and breakfast for an hour at the least.

Over his eggs and ham Algy came to the conclusion that he had never done anything wiser in his life than thus to return to the land. "She's simply bewitching," he confided to the coffee-pot. "Simply adorable!" Before he had arrived at the marmalade stage, he decided that by every endeavour he would win her regard—her respect—her admiration. This done, he would reveal his identity. "What could be more romantic?" he demanded of himself. "And there's no doubt about it," he concluded, as he rose from the table, "I'm deeply in love with this milkmaid."

And now began a day so strenuous, so full of varied interests, and novelties, and excitements, as Algy had never known before.

First he was sent by the mistress of the farm to bring in a calf from a meadow. His instructions were explicit: he was to lead the calf by the head, being assured that it would then come like a lamb; he was to hold the end of the tethering-cord firmly in his hands at the same time—on no account was he to let the calf get away.

"Yes, Lady," said Algy, and went forth to obey. But the calf was too much for him. It wrenched its head free in the twinkling of an eye, and set off in full career, with Algy vainly tugging at the end of the cord. A run ensued at a speed Algy had never equaled—more than once he assumed a horizontal position, and finally he was fairly swung off his feet and sent crashing into a gate-post, as the calf bolted from the meadow. The remainder of the journey he performed on his back.

This was a poor enough beginning—but was only a foretaste of trouble to follow. An attempt to milk a cow—which first flicked a muddy tail with stinging force across his face, then kicked over the milk-pail, and sent Algy flying head over heels before he had done more than take a seat on the milking-stool—was an event that shook his opinions as to the delights of rural life. Then he was set to fill pig-troughs with an unsavoury mess, and to clean out the styes; next to wash down a poultry-house, and to sweep a yard; then

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to chop firewood and to pump water. He appeared to give no little amusement to the farm-hands, and also to two girls, in no way prepossessing, and lacking in the quality of sympathy, who seemed to have a hand in the management of affairs.

Algy began to hate the sight of their smirking faces, as he failed dismally at one task after another; nor was he allowed time to gain proficiency at any one, for the farm-mistress seemed only anxious to find him a job at which he *could* excel. He was glad enough to escape to the back-garden, under orders to employ himself in picking beans.

After five minutes, he was not surprised when his task-mistress begged him to desist.

"You are really no good at all at odd jobs, I fear," she declared, smiling not unkindly. "What *can* you do?"

"I believe I could drive a farm-cart," said Algy, thinking of a driving-competition recently won at Hurlingham, "or a traction-engine," he added, thinking of his motor. "And I'm positively certain that I could make a good job of damson-picking."

"Very well, you shall try your hand this afternoon. I think you have done enough work for this morning. What do you say, now, to some dinner? I have arranged for you to have a meal in the kitchen—and you may rest awhile afterwards, and meet me at three o'clock in the orchard." And the task-mistress took her departure with a suddenness to which Algy by now had grown accustomed.

Of dinner Algy was glad enough; and his portion in the kitchen proved quite as acceptable as the breakfast had been. This time the meal was served by a trim maid. Algy tried his best to acquire information of a personal character concerning the lady of the farm, but all to no purpose.

"You have orders not to answer any of my questions?" he asked at last.

"That is so," was the maid's answer.

Dinner ended, Algy went forth to the orchard, lit a cigarette, and reclined in the shade of the damson-tree, where he could keep a sharp look-out for the advent of the farmer who at once so tormented and bewitched him.

"This affair of odd-job man," thought Algy to himself, "has now gone far enough, and I'm hanged if I do another piece of work to-day. The time has come for the *dénouement*."

He fell to ruminating as to how this *dénouement* might be achieved best. He would make a pretence of picking damsons, engage the lady in conversation, and then, when opportunity occurred, he would make his confession, reveal his identity, and so overwhelm this simple milkmaid with his dazzling tale.

The remainder of the journey he performed on his back.

"To tell you the truth, my dear," he would say, "I am not what you think me. The fact is, you know, I am the Honourable Algernon Brightlingsea. But be assured that I am still very much your humble servant—for I'll swear you are the prettiest milkmaid in the three Kingdoms."

And then, perhaps, she would need to be supported at the shock of the announcement. And then, perhaps, he would kiss her—and then, perhaps . . .

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"At any rate," said Algy, "if the worst comes to the worst, why—I can always escape in the motor."

So his thoughts ran on, until at last she who had filled them appeared on the scene, swinging a basket.

"Well, my friend," came her cheery greeting, "I trust you are rested, and none the worse for your first experience at farming. And now to see how you shine as a damson-picker."

Algy assured her, on his honour, that damson-picking was his one *forte*. In obedience to a command, he upraised a ladder against the tree, and stepped aloft. His mistress stood at the ladder's foot and watched the proceedings. Presently she remarked: "You've forgotten the basket,"—and mounted a few steps, so that Algy, by reaching down, could take the basket from her outstretched hand. "*Now*," said Algy to himself, "now's my chance!"

"Please wait a minute. I want to make a confession," he said.

He came a few steps down the ladder, turned, with his back to the rungs, and looked down into the upturned, smiling face of the farmer. Then he went on:

"To tell you the truth, my dear, I'm not what you think me. The fact is, you know, I'm the Honourable Algernon Brightlingsea. But be assured that I am still very much your humble servant—for I'll swear you are the prettiest milkmaid——"

Here Algy's speech was drowned in such a burst of merriment from beneath him as shook the ladder.

"I'm not joking," said he, somewhat taken aback. "'Pon my word, I mean what I say——"

But again a peal of laughter cut him short.

"My dear Algy," said the lady at the foot of the ladder, "you'll be the death of me," and the ladder shook again as she laughed.

"You have the advantage of me," said Algy coldly, and retired a few steps up the ladder in his disgust. "I fail to see the joke."

"Then I will explain." Algy's companion stepped lightly from the ladder. "I'm afraid the joke's against you, Algy—and I'm afraid you won't laugh when you *do* see it. To tell you the truth, my dear boy, I'm not what you think. The fact is, you know, I'm the Countess of Cranford. But let me assure you, I'm still very much your humble servant, for you are the most entertainingly foolish young man I've ever met." And the milk-maid-turned-Countess leant faintly against a tree-trunk, and rocked and swayed with merriment.

Algy's power of speech had deserted him. His tormentor went on:

"The point that you fail to grasp, Algy, is simply this. When I saw that you were inclined to play a joke on me, I decided to play a joke on you—*and the laugh was on my side all the time*. Especially when you went for the calf, Algy—don't you think so?"

Whatever Algy's thoughts were, he had no power to express them.

"Of course, I recognised you directly I saw your eye-glass," the Countess went rattling on, "though, to be sure, it must be years since I had a talk with you. But I've not forgotten you, Algy, though you've forgotten me. Haven't you heard that agriculture is my special hobby? And don't you know that I have a way of starting model farms up and down the country, to give employment to the lady farmers whom I train at my college of agriculture? And hasn't anyone ever told you that my husband and I come 'back to the land' ourselves every now and then?—by way of a change! 'Back to the land,' Algy, would never suit you, I'm afraid."

"N-n-never!" said Algy with emphasis, finding his voice at last. "*N-n-never!* And no more m-m-milkmaids for me!"

He came slowly to the ground, as his hopes and ambitions had descended, but more speedily, before him.

* * * * *

Algy, on returning to the village inn, found his motor-car repaired and in good running order, and the chauffeur and his man Deeds also in readiness. He started out to complete his drive across Sussex at a pace that almost must have constituted a record for speed and fury; but long before he had arrived at his sister's house, the exhilaration of speed had begun to act on his fallen spirits. His shaken nerves steadied themselves as the car leapt on beneath him, and the wind swept in cooling torrents upon his face—blowing far behind the uncomfortable thought that he had made a fool of himself.

Feeling at length that he could look even the Countess of Cranford in the face—and the Earl, too, if need be—he slackened speed, and began to see some humour in the joke against himself.

"After all," he reflected, "she doesn't know for certain that I didn't know she was the Countess all the time. But—*by Jove, I wish I'd kissed her!*"

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Photo N. Kyriazis Gaskell.

Mr. John Howton, who tells the story.

SURVIVORS' TALES OF GREAT EVENTS

No. XIX.—THE FIRST SIKH WAR.

FROM THE NARRATIVE OF MR. JOHN HOWTON, LATE 50TH FOOT.

AS TOLD TO WALTER WOOD.

FOUR battles in seven weeks with the warlike Sikhs—that is part of the military record of Mr. John Howton, who was born in 1819, and joined the 50th Foot when twenty years old. He served in the Gwalior Campaign of 1843 and was at the battle of Punniar. In the first Sikh War, the Sutlej Campaign of 1845-46, he shared in the sanguinary fights of Moodkee, December 18th; Ferozeshuhur, December 21st; Aliwal, January 28th; and Sobraon, February 10th. These engagements were practically one continuous struggle, and resulted in enormous British and Sikh losses. Mr. Howton left the Army in 1861. In spite of his great age, he enjoys perfect health, and has a marvelous memory.

WE were charging for the guns.

I was young, and full of life and strength—and I had spiked guns at Punniar in '43. So there was a familiar look about the grinning muzzles, and the sort of invitation to come on that no British soldier could resist.

And we did charge, too, in those hard fighting days in India, when most things depended on the bayonet. Colours flew, bullets whistled, steel flashed, smoke choked us, thirst tortured us—yet whenever the bugles rang out the wild "Charge!" a fierce "Hurrah!" was shouted and we tore along, sweating and panting in our stiff and sweltering uniforms. And we nearly always got there.

I was rushing on with my brave old regiment, the 50th, on the right of the British line. The Sikh intrenchments were ahead of us, the Sikh guns were belching death, the Sikhs themselves were daring and defying us.

What a mad confusion it was!

The intrenchments were only forty yards away; we were nearly in them, almost within steel touch of the warriors of the Sutlej, who had conquered even the Afghans. I was rushing ahead, strong on my legs, sound in my lungs, seeing nothing but the gunners and the guns, wanting nothing but to be in amongst them.

Suddenly, owing to a shock which I did not know then, and which I have never understood since, I fell to the ground and lost my senses. How long I remained unconscious I cannot say, but perhaps not more than a few moments. When I came round, I saw that my cap was lying just in front of me, and that the regiment was forging on, still towards the intrenchments.

I looked up at the batteries, and saw a great, bearded Sikh waving his sword and shouting to his men to keep the hated *feringhees* off and destroy them. I looked at my musket and saw that it was loaded. "Well," I said to myself, "before I get up I'll have a trial shot." I stretched myself on the sandy plain and took a nice, steady aim. Whether my bullet went home or whether it was somebody else's, I cannot say, but the moment I fired the Sikh disappeared. Then I jumped up and ran on to rejoin my section, fourteen or fifteen men.

Marvelous is the luck of war!

I had been struck down, which seemed bad fortune indeed; yet even as I rushed back to my comrades they were destroyed by a shower of grape-shot from one of the guns. All were killed or wounded except the sergeant—Godwin they called him—who was left standing.

"Come on!" he shouted, and the pair of us, sole survivors of our section, dashed

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onward for the intrenchments. I had plucked up wonderfully, and I was the first to reach them. I staggered blindly on and slipped down a sandy bank six or eight feet deep, which they had built up with a few planks; then I struggled up the opposite sloping side to a twelve-pounder gun which was mounted in their battery.

I got my arm round the muzzle and ducked my head under the very mouth. Instantly there was a terrific flash and a deafening roar. The gun had been fired, and my cap had gone with the ball, but my head was left on my shoulders. Yet so close was I to the explosion that for three weeks I was deaf owing to the jar of the recoil.

But I was in amongst the guns. I had now a footing in the embrasure, and where I had got two or three more quickly followed, and larger bodies after them. In that way, with our successful charge, we finished the work of the field artillery and the rocket battery.

We formed a sort of half-moon round our trophies, and the Sikhs, knowing that they could not recover their guns, began to retire from the intrenchments. This was Sobraon, remember—I am not talking about the battles in order, but as they come into my mind; and since they all made what was really one great fight, it does not matter.

Well, when the Sikhs began to leave their stronghold they had only one way of escape left open to them, and that was across the Sutlej, a broad, swift river in their rear. A bridge of boats had been thrown over the stream, and it was towards this and safety that the enemy pressed forward in hurrying, disordered thousands.

Safety seemed assured for them, yet they met their doom just when they felt most secure, for our engineers had been at work on the bridge, and when it was blocked up with flying fugitives, the very middle of it was blown into the air. The Sikhs who were nearest the intrenchments pushed on, not knowing what had happened, regardless of the noise and shouts, and by sheer weight of bodies drove hundreds of their fellows into the yawning chasm. So it happened that at Sobraon, where thirteen thousand Sikhs perished or were wounded, men by regiments, who had not received a shot or scratch in the battle, died unexpectedly in the water.

Ah, yes! It was a great fight, a stubborn battle, a chapter of thrilling things, and abounding in those strange incidents which do not seem to come about in warfare nowadays, because times and men are so different. In those days there was no Victoria Cross, yet soldiers did not do lesser deeds because there was no bronze recognition of their valour. They took up fighting as their life's trade—once a soldier always a soldier was a pretty general rule; and there was no chance for a young man who had scarcely learnt to march talking about having a claim on his country because he had served it.

But I must not moralise. I must get back to the guns and the Sikhs and the battle. We had our own regimental Colours, and many a fierce fight in those old days was waged around them. It was our duty to defend them to the last, and we were always just as keen to seize the enemy's. We clung to and preserved our own, and when the fight was over we found that we were a third Colour to the good. It was captured in a gallant way, and, by reason of one of those strange things which are done in time of war, the wrong man got credit for the performance.

The Sikh Colour was wrested from the enemy by a brave fellow named Leonard Hale—exactly how or where I do not know and nobody could tell. But he had it and he came up with it and made a rambling, excited statement about it. He wanted to take it to the spot where our own regimental Colours were, and he was making his way towards them when one of the officers, Lieutenant White, stopped him and told him he could not reach the place. "If you will give it to me," he said, "I will take care of it." And so Hale delivered up his Colour, and that was the last he had to do with it, for Mr. White got his name down for it, and poor Hale was knocked completely out.

There was another man who took another Colour—McCabe, of the 61st—but he was sharper than Hale, and stuck to it until he planted it alongside the Colours of his own regiment. Mark the difference in men's fortunes. He got a commission for his performance, and was posted to the 18th Royal Irish. I saw him when he came from China with them. The 61st were always great friends of the 50th.

I have been putting the cart before the horse a bit, beginning with Sobraon when I should have started with Moodkee; but I suppose that is because a man at times would rather look at the finish of a great and heavy enterprise than at the start or middle. We can, however, work back a little and speak of a few of the many things I saw and heard, and of some of the famous men who were then either at the summit of their fame or winning their spurs. Among the latter was Havelock, brave and true as he always was

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I got my arm round the muzzle and ducked my head under the very mouth.

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until he died in the Mutiny—here, there, and everywhere, escaping death in the most wonderful manner.

It was Havelock who, at Moodkee, brought back a native regiment that had turned tail, bitingly telling them that the Sikhs were in front and not behind. There was Sir Robert Sale, who was mortally wounded at Moodkee, Sir Hugh Gough, and, above all in my recollection, Sir Harry Smith. What a soldier he was! What a fighter! What a swearer! What a friend! And how the whole Army worshiped him! South African towns to-day remind you of what he did there and in India—Harrismith, Ladysmith, Aliwal North, and so on. He was a stern disciplinarian, but he tempered swift and awful justice with a mercy that saved many a humble soldier's life.

There was the distressing case of poor Jim Harris. He had been on duty for two whole days and nights—lots of us had to do that during the whole of our short but terrible campaign. Harris was a good soldier, but after all he was only a man. In spite of his excessive duty, he was put on again for the third consecutive night. In such a climate, with such work to do, this burden was more than he could bear. He marched to his post, and fell down in a dead sleep—he did not lie down, but literally thudded to the earth. When the officer went round to see that the sentries were alert and at their posts, he found poor Harris sleeping. They roused him, and put him in the rearguard for the night.

Next morning the sentry was taken before Sir Harry, sad enough, for he knew that he had been guilty of a crime for which in those days there was only one punishment.

"Ah! my poor fellow," said Sir Harry, "I am sorry enough for you; but you know that for such a crime as this you must die."

The sentry—he was a very young fellow—looked piteously around him; but he could say nothing, and did not try to speak just then.

"Have you any excuse or explanation to give?" Sir Harry asked. "Can you say why you went to sleep at your post in the presence of the enemy?"

Harris pulled himself together.

Any man can speak when he has to plead for the life that is likely to get short shrift.

"I can only say this, sir," he answered. "I was on duty for the third night in succession. But I didn't fall asleep, sir. I simply dropped to the ground. I don't even remember it, I was so tired."

"Fetch the sergeant of the guard!" thundered Sir Harry. "Now," he said, when the sergeant came, "how is it that a man was put on duty for three successive nights? Surely there were enough men to share the work without going to such extremes as this? How is it?"

They could not answer him: Then he had the orderly-sergeant of Harris' company before him, probing the thing to the very heart; but the Colonel put a sort of stopper on.

"I am very sorry, Sir Harry," he said, "so sorry that I feel as if I would like to be shot myself; but there has been foul play."

"Yes," replied Sir Harry, "foul play and bad management."

Then he turned to the prisoner again. "My lad," he said, in kinder tones, "you have been guilty of a very terrible crime; but you have been imposed upon, and I shall forgive you."

So the prisoner was set free, and we were almost as glad as he was, because he was a nice boy, a very nice boy. Poor fellow! he did not enjoy his pardon long. We went into action again soon after that, and he was killed.

It was things like this that made Sir Harry worshiped by all the men. There were other reasons why we loved him, too. Like the good commander he was, he always gave his soldiers his first consideration. He liked the barrack and battlefield calls well enough, so did we; but he loved as well, when we were on those long, hot, dusty marches, which were more dreaded than meeting the enemy, to order the buglers to sound the glorious "grog" call, or the call for meat and drink and bread to be served out. And it was woe, indeed, for the quartermasters if they weren't ready or began to offer excuses. I saw one of them come trembling up when the little Scotch bugler—"Rush 'Em" we nicknamed him—had sounded the "grog" call. The quartermaster said he had no grog available, because he had nowhere to put it.

"Nowhere to put it!" shouted Sir Harry. "Why, your ——fat carcase is big enough to store all we've got! Go and find it, or by —— I'll sling you up to the topmost branch of the highest tree as a warning!"

It is wonderful what a few words in season from the right quarter will do. He went and got the grog from somewhere.

No, it was useless for any officer to shuffle about with excuses when Sir Harry had ordered a certain thing to be done. He knew that the welfare of his division depended on its proper feeding—we had such marches as had never been known in India since Wellington made his name there.

We had, in my regiment, a sort of link with the Iron Duke, too—a survivor of the

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Peninsular War. This was Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Thomas Ryan, who was then nearly sixty years old. He was severely wounded at Sobraon, and died a few days later at Simla.

One evening, after a terrible day, when most of us were nearly dead with fatigue, and thirst, and hunger, Sir Harry rode up and said: "I think you fellows look very hungry. We'll have a double allowance of bread and beef and grog to-night." He told someone to fetch the quartermaster, and the quartermaster came.

"Issue a double allowance of rations and grog, Mr. Moore," he said.

"Oh, dear me, Sir Harry!" moaned the quartermaster. "Look at the expense!"

"What the —— has that got to do with you?" shouted Sir Harry. "You haven't got to pay it!" And without another word the quartermaster turned his fat old pony round and wobbled off, I can tell you.

I think everybody has been agreed that one of the most extraordinary things about this stubborn Sikh war, this famous quartette of batt'es of the Sutlej, which in just over seven weeks smashed the finest native army in India, and gave the Punjab to England, was the number of guns which the enemy had, and the number that we spiked or captured or destroyed.

Spiking the guns! Why, it became so common that, when we had charged into the batteries and driven the Sikhs away, we used to get our ramrods, drive the point into the touch-hole and snap off the ramrod, leaving the gun useless. The authorities meant to supply us with proper gear for the work—hammers and nails: but we never got them. Like many other things, these did not come up from Delhi till the worst of the war was over.

At Ferozeshuhur and at Aliwal we got gun-spiking enough to rejoice the heart of a military glutton. Ferozeshuhur was a frightful two-days' fight, December 21st and 22nd—it made a sorry Christmas for many a man and many a home. We had been in the thick of it on the first day, and Sir Harry said on the second morning, when we were going to renew the battle: "You will be in the third line to-day, because you were in the hottest of it last night."

Well, I daresay we should have kept to that instruction all right, but even a general's orders cannot always be obeyed. It was a harassing night—one Sikh gun in particular worried us, a 32-pounder, which kept dropping pills in amongst us and doing heavy mischief. For instance, all the horses of one of our batteries were destroyed, so at daylight, in spite of what Sir Harry had said, we were desperately keen to get level with the guns again. We made towards them, growing more and more excited as we advanced. We pushed ahead until we were within a few, a very few, yards of the enemy. We were going blindly on, helter-skelter, with, as it seemed, no guiding hand, no master mind, amongst us. How was it, I wondered, that, although we were so near to the batteries, there was no one to give us the magic word to rush them? Almost as soon as the thought flashed through my mind there was a wild, mad shout of "Charge!" followed by "Hurrah!" as madly. Then it was a dash and a rush again, and at a bound we were in amongst the guns, and they were ours.

Now, the curious thing is that no one knew who had given the order to charge—all we could find out was that in the intense excitement somebody had rapped the word out—and we had obeyed. That came well on the other deviation, for instead of being in the third line we were in the very first again, and Sir Harry told us pretty luridly what he thought about us. But, all the same, I do not think that in his heart of hearts he blamed us very much for our disobedience, because, you see, we were in his own division, and he never liked his pet regiments to get left. All's well that ends well, but it might have finished very badly for us, seeing that only a little band of fifty made the charge, and the Sikhs could have rolled us up without feeling it. Luckily for us they hadn't stopped to count.

At Aliwal, as you know, there was a very famous charge by the 16th Lancers, and some fine gun-spiking. One of the last of the Aliwal troopers and one of the last of the officers have just died. The trooper, Mares, rode in the charge with his regiment, got up to the guns, spiked some of them, and galloped safely out. This was a very desperate encounter, because, although we had scored two great victories and driven the Sikhs over the Sutlej, we were too much weakened and exhausted to follow up our successes, and our having to wait for reinforcements led the enemy to believe that we had become more or less panic-stricken. So they recrossed the river and gave us battle.

Aliwal itself was a village which stood on the plain, and as we advanced to storm it and dislodge the enemy it did not look bigger than a house or an umbrella. We were about eleven thousand opposed to fifteen, but some of the fifteen thousand were hillmen who were not very plucky fighters, and they bolted

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and left the Sikhs to it. I cannot say that we were very sorry for that, for by this time we knew what brave, desperate fellows we had to fight—warriors who gave no quarter and did not ask for it.

Sir Harry—Aliwal was his own particular fight—led us on and handled us magnificently. We were in fine form, too, seeing that as soon as our spies had come in and told us that the enemy was ready to meet us, Sir Harry had ordered meat and bread and grog to be served out to us immediately. He knew that a British Army fought best on its stomach.

We were plunged into the thick of the fight, the infantry forging on towards the masses of Sikhs. We saw that the 16th Lancers were posted on the left of the line. We were going steadily at our work when we heard a terrific commotion, a noise which rose above all other noises of the battle.

First the trumpets sounded, then our own bugles rang—and we opened out to let the 16th thunder over the plain to charge the Sikh guns. They shook the very earth as they galloped through and past us, with wild shouts of "Hurrah!" and "Hurrah for England!" And, believe me, they had a foe who was worthy of the finest cavalry that ever carried lance. Before the charge the Sikhs had hurled away their muskets, and with their swords and shields had rushed upon the horsemen.

The Lancers were met with an awful fire; but they drove into the very heart of the Sikh masses, broke them up, scattered them, and captured or spiked their guns. A poor little trumpeter, who was one of the very first to reach the enemy, was literally blown to pieces. Not a fragment of him, not even a particle of his clothes, was ever found.

The Lancers drove the Sikhs away, but the broken masses formed up again about three hundred yards off, and defied us afresh.

Sir Harry dashed up to one of the field artillery officers. "Abbott," he said, "we can't have them there. Warm them up a bit. Shift them." And Captain Abbott did warm them, too. They found the heat too much, and so they sullenly withdrew across the river, leaving more than fifty guns with us. Two of their guns they saved, and actually got them over to the other side; but Lieutenant Holmes, who belonged to an irregular cavalry regiment, and Gunner Scott, a horse artilleryman, forded the river, spiked the guns—they were 12-pounders—and got safely back again.

Romance as well as blood entered largely into that long-past fighting in India. A great many French officers, veterans of the Napoleonic wars, whose very souls were wrapped up in campaigning, had entered the service of the Sikhs, glad enough of any chance to fight against their old enemy. A few renegade Englishmen, too, were serving with the Sikhs.

In the very hottest of the battle at Aliwal the captain of my company, Captain J. B. Bonham, shouted: "Hallo! Who's this coming towards us?" He pointed to a strange figure which was emerging from the battle-smoke, the figure of a man who obviously wanted to surrender. "Thompson," shouted the captain to a sergeant, "go and meet him. Bring him in."

The sergeant ran up and took his man, and piloted him to the rear-guard. He proved to be a very remarkable person, an Englishman named Potter, or Brown, I forget which, who had deserted from the East India Company twenty years before and had joined the Sikh army. He was now a general of the Sikh artillery, and was taken before our Commander-in-Chief, who had had letters from Brigadier Wheeler showing that he had wished to give himself up, but had been advised by the Brigadier that he could do greater service by remaining in his present position, and waiting till the war ended. Then, when matters had been settled, he was again brought before the Commander-in-Chief, who gave him the command of the new contingent.

After the fight was ended an extra guard was put over the prisoner in the evening, until Sir Harry should be able to see him.

When Sir Harry entered the guard-tent he began to make short work of such a man, and promised that he should be hanged from a tree first thing next morning. But apparently certain things were told him which made him waver or hesitate, or, at least, wish that some higher officer would deal with the matter. So he dispatched one of our fleet camels to the Commander-in-Chief, who was not far away, and the order came back for the man to be spared. Then it came out that he had been a very valuable ally for us, and had been in communication with the English to our great advantage. One of the very last things he did before bolting to us to rejoin his old countrymen—which was his first chance—was to have the Sikh guns so trained that the shot, instead of ploughing through our ranks, killing and wounding us, buried themselves harmlessly in the earth about a dozen yards in front of us.

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They shook the very earth as they galloped . . . with wild shouts of "Hurrah!" and "Hurrah for England!"

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THAT ASS WILSON SCORES AGAIN

He Eclipses his Friends in a Riding School, and Rescues an Heiress.

I HAVE mentioned in a former account of our doings that we four clerks in Crogger, Prowle, & Co.'s,—Simmons, Bates, Wilson, and myself—were enthusiastic volunteers, though non-efficients until Wilson, with that "uppishness" which always hovers over him like a blight, put in the needful number of drills and became an efficient—simply, as I believe, to crow silently over us. I don't know how you crow silently, but—but Wilson did it, anyhow.

Efficiency in volunteering is not everything, as we others were constantly ramming into him. Enthusiasm, which we three possessed so bountifully, goes for much more than that. But Wilson couldn't see it; the fellow absolutely could *not* see it! Some people are so dense.

Still intent upon serving our country, Simmons, Bates, and myself arranged to spend our forthcoming holidays at the seaside in a course of equitation. None of us had ever done any riding in our lives, with the exception of a little "sand practice" in our youthful days, and we felt that, should we ever be summoned to serve "on the tented field," and required to act as mounted infantry, it would be as well that we should understand something—if only the elements—of how to manage a horse.

As we knew that Wilson, the son of a hard-riding, hunting farmer, was quite at home in the saddle, we decided to allow him once more to join us. And I must say the fellow seemed extremely grateful for our disinterested kindness. Wilson is, as I have frequently said elsewhere, an ass; but then he knows it—I will say that much for him—and "a fault confessed is half redressed."

Bates said that Mudbury-super-Mare was the very place for us. He knew of an excellent boarding-house there called Ocean View. The lady who kept it was extremely "genteel," knew what good society was, and would therefore appreciate us. All her boarders were of quite superior class. There was a Military Riding School in the town, downs to gallop over, and a most animated sea-front on which to while away our leisure hours.

Simmons observed:

"That seems all right. At all events, it's better than going anywhere abroad again."

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And the rest of us, recollecting our sea experiences crossing over to Belgium, hastily agreed with him. The "stormy main" is much pleasanter to talk about than to adventure oneself upon.

After ascertaining Mrs. Blowhorn's terms, the four of us finished up our work at Crogger, Prowle, & Co.'s, and went down to Mudbury-super-Mare by the afternoon train.

Dinner was at 6.30, and I think our arrival must have brightened up the *ménage* considerably. There were about ten ladies, of very varying ages, present, including Mrs. Blowhorn, who carved at the head of the long table, and two highly uninteresting old men. Before we were half way through dinner I noticed that a girl sitting opposite was taking rather more than passing interest in our party, or, to speak more correctly—why, indeed, should I conceal it?—in me.

A very good-looking girl she was, too. "Hair dark as the raven's wing," such eyes! such teeth! such lips! Of course, I am not in the least conceited—far from it—but—well, I should have been blind had I failed to notice her bright glances in the direction of Wilson and me. I looked back and smiled in return. My friends tell me I have "rather a way" with women.

After dinner we went out into the hall, ignoring Wilson—he always wants keeping in his place—and then sat on the front steps, for the night was warm and genial. I lit a Flor di Smellerado—cost me three-ha'pence apiece, wholesale. I buy 'em fifty at a time, and my tobacconist says he has them specially imported for me.

Presently that same girl came sauntering out, pretending to look across the road to the sea, but—the thing was too palpable—she evidently wanted to see something more of *me*—perhaps I ought to say of *us*, but I don't know. So, in her hearing, Bates and I began to talk of our military duties. I thought it just as well she should know something of us, and see the sort of men we were.

I asked Bates loudly what sort of beasts they were at Mudbury, and the silly idiot, mistaking my meaning, replied:

"S-sh, old man, you'll be offending the whole of the people here if you call them——"

"Chargers—horses, I mean," I broke in hastily.

"Oh!" he said; "well, I haven't been round to the riding establishment yet, but I wrote a post-card telling the sergeant to come up this evening and take our orders. Personally, as you know, I never care to ride anything that hasn't got a bit of blood in it!"

I fancy this impressed the girl. She took us for military officers. Then, on the principle of striking while the iron's hot, I rose, and, bowing slightly, asked her:

"Pardon me, but do you object to smoke? If so, I will throw this away (indicating my Smellerado) immediately."

She was very gracious, and said she liked the smoke, and we exchanged a few commonplaces; then, turning to that ass Wilson, who was shyly standing just behind me, she said:

"Thank you so much for fetching my mother's cloak, Mr. Wilson!"

So the fellow had—behind our backs—been trying to ingratiate himself with the girl's mother, and actually telling her his name! An extremely artful and underhand form of procedure, I consider. And on the strength of that—it couldn't be because Wilson was as attractive as any of the rest of us—Wilson is quite plain, whilst we are all—well, we are *not* plain—the girl and he carried on an animated conversation for half-an-hour, and finally he had the audacity to accept her invitation to play bridge with her, her mother, and aunt, in the drawing-room. Very bad form, I thought it! Why on earth didn't the girl ask *me*?

However, we took our revenge later, when Wilson joined us in the smoking-room, by treating all his remarks with a studied coolness dashed with calm disdain. And next morning it was *I*, not he, who received the first gracious smile of Miss Phyllis Smith-Robinson—I had ascertained her name from the proprietress, who also informed me (she was a garrulous person) that the girl was "quite an heiress," and had £300 a year of her own. "*And* expectations," added Mrs. Blowhorn, with a meaning nod of the head. Whereupon I immediately determined that that ass Wilson should have no opportunities afforded him of philandering with the girl.

Whilst enjoying an after-breakfast cigarette on the front steps, I was rather annoyed to see Bates preening himself in the bright glances of Miss Smith-Robinson. What on earth had Bates to do with the matter? I wondered.

We were to begin our course of instruction at the Military Riding School at 10 a.m., and so had come down to breakfast in our uniform khaki breeches and puttees. Noticing this, Miss Smith-Robinson asked me artlessly if we rode a great deal.

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"Oh," I replied in airy tones, "yes—yes, when duty compels us."

I smacked my leg with my riding-whip, and stamped, so as to make the spurs jingle. Unluckily, my left rowel caught in the heiress's holland skirt and tore a hole in it. She drew her gown away, looking quite annoyed at me. Then she turned to Wilson and said sweetly:

"Oh, and I see you are also going to ride. Do you go on the Downs?"

"No, not to-day," replied Wilson, "we are merely going to the riding-school to take a les——"

"Ahem!" I coughed loudly to drown the fellow's silly cackle. Why on earth did he want to tell her we were neophytes? Besides, it was false; *he* was not a beginner. The worst of Wilson is, that in belittling himself he cheapens other people as well.

I at once struck in, and explained:

"No, we shall probably be engaged in military equestrian tactics all to-day and to-morrow—after that, very likely, we shall go for a breather on the Downs—nothing like a gallop for clearing the cobwebs out of your brain, is there?"

And I again smacked my whip on my leg and stamped; but Miss Smith-Robinson's beastly little Maltese terrier was just behind my heel, and, whilst looking the reverse way, he got the full benefit of the spur, whereupon he tucked his tail between his legs and, letting go an anguished howl, did a "best-on-record" down the front steps and across the road to the bandstand. Miss Smith-Robinson looked angrily at me, and turned to talk to Wilson.

I snatched up my slouch hat with the cocks' feathers, adjusted the chin strap, and strode out of the hall, calling to Bates and Simmons to follow me.

"Come on, I don't mind keeping our sergeant waiting, but, hang it all! I don't want the horses to stand about and get cold!"

Although I had purposely ignored Wilson, he at once left Miss Smith-Robinson's side and followed us. I clanked down the stone steps first, and I'm sure the guests assembled took me for the superior officer of the party. At all events, the small Swiss waiter always, after this, addressed me as "*M. le Capitaine*," whilst to none of the rest did he ever vouchsafe any military title whatever. I suppose I do look a bit of a soldier.

Arrived at the riding establishment we were met by the sergeant and conducted into a spacious "school," thickly strewn with tan. A gallery, for the accommodation of spectators, ran across one end.

We explained our needs to Sergeant O'Dowd, and then, in stentorian tones, he roared for "Moichael."

And "Moichael" instantly appeared, having apparently fallen through a hole in the wall.

"Bring th' wooden harse," said the sergeant.

"Moichael" saluted and disappeared.

I exchanged a blank look with my comrades, and then ventured on a remonstrance.

"Really, sergeant," I began, "I don't think a wooden horse—I suppose you mean one of those grey painted things with the green rockers that one sees in toy shops?—will do us any good. We came here to ride real horses."

The sergeant smiled grimly.

"The wooden harse is called so because he's got a wooden mouth and wooden action, sorr. We always put beginners on um."

I turned rather red, and muttered an apology.

Then "Moichael" appeared, leading a sedate looking brown. When Bates got into the saddle, he picked up the reins and said: "It feels jolly."

At first he couldn't get the beast to move at all—so he jammed one spur into its crate-like ribs, whereupon the animal expostulated with its hind leg, and Simmons and I had to skip out of the way sharply, or one of us would have suffered.

"Don't hang on by's head, sorr!" cried the sergeant to Bates, as the beast started on an uneasy trot.

"Then wha-wha-what *am* I to hang on by?" gasped Bates, as he jolted round the school, frantically endeavouring to separate the curb rein from the snaffle.

Three other horses were brought out, and Simmons and I bumped round the school, half on and half off our saddles, followed by Wilson.

I soon found there was something wrong with my stirrups. The beastly things kept slipping off my feet—most absurd to make stirrups that way. And, really, I couldn't help a feeling of annoyance as the sergeant roared out to me.

"Kape your toes down, or you'll *niver* get the irons in their place!"

"Sit up, sorr, sit up!" he cried to Bates, as he passed. Bates really required the admonition, for he was sitting halfway up his horse's neck, and looking like a monkey on a stick. "Sit back in your saddle—thot's

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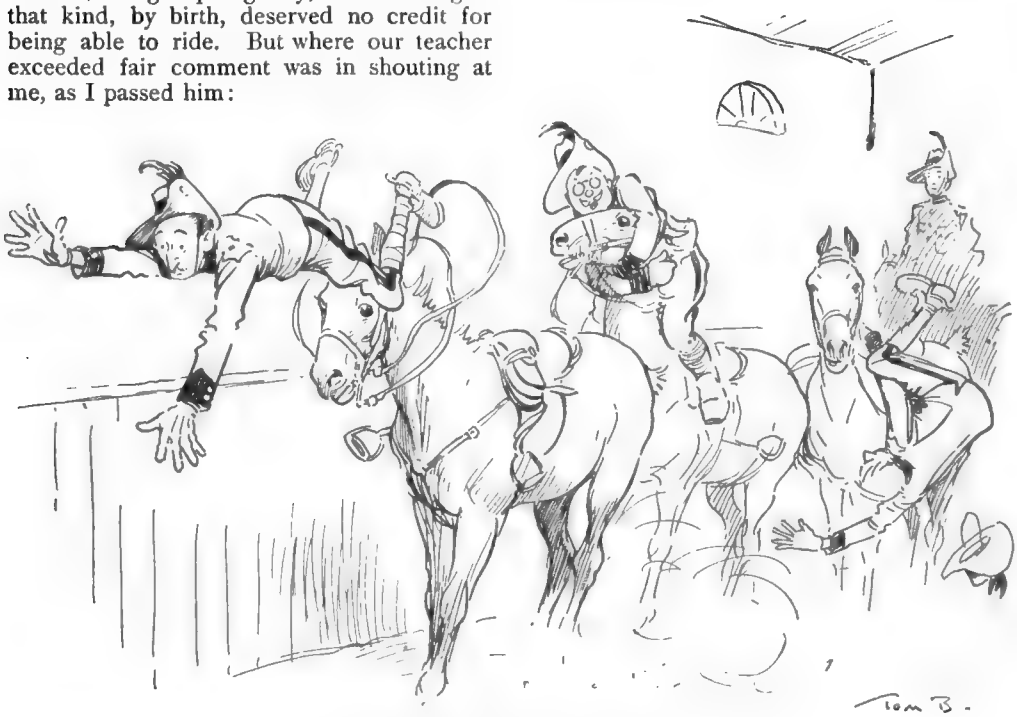
betther, thot's a thought betther." Then Wilson passed without drawing any comment, but as Simmons came round, our gallant instructor shouted to him:

"Don't catch hold of yer saddle wid yer hands, but stick on wid yer knees and ca'ves—thot's it—sit up straight, now—sure, ye'll hit the harse's ears wid yer nose if ye bend over um loike thot!"

My two companions really looked so absurd that I hardly wondered at the sergeant's caustic comments. Of course, Wilson, being a ploughboy, or something of that kind, by birth, deserved no credit for being able to ride. But where our teacher exceeded fair comment was in shouting at me, as I passed him:

"Ye ought to stick toighter to yer saddles



Bates went straight over his horse s head.

"Phwat do ye want to be afther sittin' on the harse's ears for?"

And the rest laughed. I couldn't see anything funny in it. I was *not* sitting on the horse's ears, I was well behind them.

"Now yer sittin' with a holler in yer back, and it's loike a sack of coals ye are; och, bad luck to ut, ye've lost yer stirrup-iron again!"

He jammed it on to my foot with no gentle hand. We trotted on sharply, and then suddenly the sergeant cried "Halt!" and, at the word of command, each horse suddenly pulled up in a single stride. The picture presented by my companions was very funny. Bates went straight over his horse's head, and landed on his face in the tan. Simmons shot right up his animal's neck, but the intelligent beast, raising its head in the nick of time, saved the final catastrophe, and Simmons was enabled to scramble back into the saddle. As for me, I came off—dismounted, that is—in a new way that I'd just thought of—you suddenly leave your saddle and come down, over the horse's shoulder, on to your own head—I'm afraid the sergeant thought it was involuntary.

than that, or it's yer necks ye'll be breakin'," was his comment.

After trotting for another ten minutes, the sergeant cried:

"Cross yer stirrups in front of yer saddles."

Bates, Simmons, and I protested as one man, but our instructor was inexorable.

"Trot!" he shouted. And round the school we went, clinging on to manes and saddles as best we could. Sergeant O'Dowd mercifully refrained from crying "halt" again—or, in our defenceless position, there might have been serious loss of life.

An hour's suffering ensued, and then we

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stopped, and returned to Ocean View for luncheon.

I thought the heiress looked at me with rather a humorous twinkle in her eye, when I said across the table to Bates:

"By Jove, those horses *can* pull, eh? By the way, you should try that new dodge of mine of getting off down the beast's shoulder; in action it would be very effective, supposing the enemy suddenly opened fire from a masked battery, eh?"

And then she laughed outright. I wondered why.

We renewed our riding in the afternoon for another hour, and then strolled upon the parade in our riding kit. We came in for a good deal of admiration from the fair sex—puttees and long spurs set off a man's leg to the best possible advantage—that is, when he has a decently shaped leg—Wilson has not. Doubtless that is why he changed into ordinary attire before walking on the sea-front with the rest of us.

Next morning after breakfast we lit our cigarettes, linked arms, and walked up the street to the riding-school again, creating rather a sensation. I think we took the conceit out of men dressed in flannels and blazers; our equestrian "get-up" struck the girls as something out of the common.

When I told the sergeant that we now wished to do some jumping, he demurred. And, of course, that ass Wilson backed him up, and said he was right.

"You just shut up!" I retorted (I can be very sarcastic when I like). "You're not the only man who can ride a horse over a jump."

Really, Wilson was getting beyond all bearing. I can stand a good deal, but there comes a time when even a fool will—I mean a worm will—turn.

We carried the day, and the horses were brought out. We rode round the school at a walk—none of us seemed to care for more trotting. Then the bushed-up hurdles were erected—two flights, one low and the other an enormous height (well over three feet six). The sergeant roared out:

"Number wan!"

Wilson was "number wan." He galloped up to the low hurdles, skimmed over them, and then, as easily, surmounted the high ones.

"Number two!"

Without a moment's delay, I rode up to the low hurdles. I felt perfectly confident as my horse rose, but the latter part of the trip was disconcerting. Somehow, I seemed to be traveling faster than my horse. However, with my usual presence of mind, I let go the reins, and clutched my mount round the neck, thus averting a disaster. I pulled up, settled myself afresh in the saddle, and then charged the three-foot-sixer.

"Sott back, or ye'll be thar afore the harse!" cried the sergeant.

Arrived at the obstacle, I shot up the horse's neck, sat on his head for a brief moment, feebly waving my arms in the air in hopes of finding something to cling to, and then the horse went galloping on, whilst I landed on what the sergeant called the "flure."

But to see the performances of Simmons and Bates was quite laughable. They absolutely could not sit a horse at a fence at all.

Personally, I felt rather indifferent about trying any more jumping, but, after persuasion, I remounted, and, full of resolve, swept over the low hurdles, and rushed at the high ones again. But disliking the look of the three-foot-sixer as I came to it, I tried to pull up my impetuous beast and induce him to go slower. And I succeeded only too well, for, suddenly, he tried to stop altogether by sticking his toes in the ground, and ploughing up two long furrows in the tan. Unprepared for this, I flew straight over his head through the air and landed on my face.

Of course, if it hadn't been for that ass Wilson wishing to show off, and give us a lead over, this would not have happened.

Soon afterwards we three, arm in arm, strolled back to luncheon, leaving Wilson to come on by himself. We were all pretty sick of Wilson.

After dinner that night we made a little circle round Miss Smith-Robinson, and began relating our experiences of the morning. She always seemed so interested in my—our—doings.

I said that the sergeant had put me on a very restive horse, and that, but for my own determination, I should never have got the beast to face the fences.

"Pretty stiff fences they were, too," I said. "I daresay the big one was nearly five feet."

And then Wilson must needs interrupt and say:

"Oh, my dear fellow, you're making quite a mistake; I don't think it was much more than a yard high."

I frowned at him, making awful facial contortions, but all he did was to inquire anxiously whether the ginger-beer at dinner

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had caused me any internal suffering. Unspeakable idiot!

A minute later, Miss Smith-Robinson said:

"But isn't it lovely to gallop over the downs?"

"Oh, it is," I said, smiling encouragingly. I had never been outside the riding-school, it is true, but, still, I quite entered into her ideas.

We chatted for a short time, and then, feeling that I should speak with more freedom if that ass Wilson were not present ready to contradict, or at least qualify, my version of our deeds, I managed to detach the heiress from the rest, by asking her to sit on the steps with me.

She consented, and then I said confidentially:

"Fact is, Miss Smith-Robinson, Wilson is a bit of a funk, you know. His great weakness is that he thinks he can ride. It was really quite ridiculous to see him in the school this morning, trying to get over the fences; I had to give him a lead at last, and even then he bungled it shockingly. As for me, I think these things should be done quickly. I just gave my brute his head, and——"

With my usual presence of mind I . . . clutched my mount round the neck.

"And he put you on *yours!*" she burst out, quite unexpectedly, with a hearty laugh.

"Er—I—I don't quite understand you," I said, rather taken aback. "How do you know what hap——?"

"I know everything! I was up in the gallery all the time," she said. "Mr. Wilson is the only one amongst you who can ride a bit!"

And so, once again, had we fellows been humiliated and scored off by that ass Wilson!

We arranged a prawning expedition on the rocks for the following afternoon, and I offered to teach Miss Smith-Robinson how the thing was done. She had never been prawning before—nor had I. Still, one knows instinctively how prawns should be caught.

Needless to say that Wilson must put in his spoke and say that the tide would be rising at the time we had fixed. He always must interfere. I told him squarely that if he was afraid, he'd better stop at home.

Scrambling from rock to rock, we soon got a long way out, and began scooping into the shallow pools with our little nets. It was very interesting work, and Phyllis quickly picked up the necessary knowledge, and, in fact, shortly became as proficient as I was myself. True, we didn't catch anything; but it was an absorbing occupation. Indeed, so

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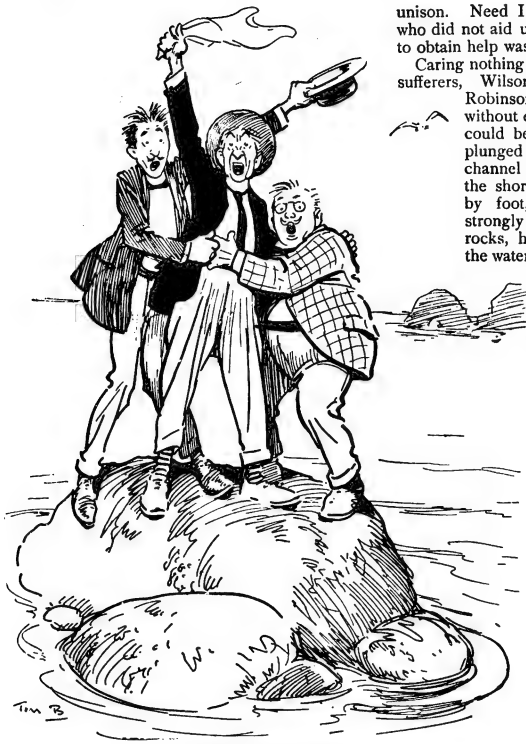

We all yelled in unison.

absorbing was it, that we forgot that there was a deep channel running between the rocks we were on and the shore, which channel the tide had been unostentatiously filling up whilst we were leaping, like chamois, from crag to crag.

Suddenly we looked up and realised our awful position. We were completely surrounded by the sea.

With me, to think is to act. Without a moment's hesitation, I rushed to the highest point of rock, and, waving my handkerchief, screamed loudly for help.

I was quickly joined in my efforts by Simmons and Bates, and we all yelled in unison. Need I say that the only man who did not aid us in our desperate effort to obtain help was the unstable Wilson?

Caring nothing for the rest of his fellow sufferers, Wilson seized Miss Smith-Robinson in his arms, and, without even waiting to see if he could be of any assistance to *us*, plunged breast-high into the channel which cut us off from the shore. Battling his way foot by foot, for the tide swirled strongly round the base of the rocks, he bore the girl through the water and placed her in safety on the beach beyond. But did he ever think of coming back for us? Not for a moment! The callous selfishness of the man stood revealed in all its hideousness, as we three continued to scream helplessly from the rocks.

Five minutes later, a small boat was launched from the shore, and we were snatched from a watery grave; no thanks to Wilson!

When he, with his fair burden, had struggled ashore, a hearty cheer had been raised by the spectators standing by. But when the boatman rowed across with our shivering forms, nothing but derisive laughter greeted us. And, whereas Miss Smith-Robinson loaded Wilson with lavish praises, she never spoke a word of thanks to any of us. I suppose one must not look for justice in this world.

And the climax of our defeat was reached when the brutal boatman who had rescued us shouted out in the hearing of the crowd: "Wodjer make me launch a boat for, yer silly cuckoos? Was yer mar afraid you'd git yer socks wet?"

We three registered a vow never to speak to the offender any more. And none of us did—until quite late the following day. But, although we made him apologise, we all felt that that ass Wilson had scored again.

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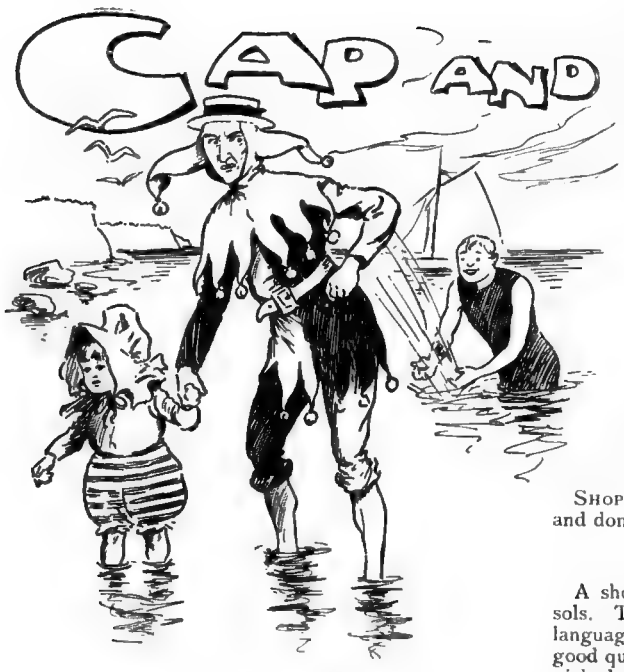

THE SOFT ANSWER.

"Why did you place such a tough fowl before me?" asked the indignant lady patron of the waiter in a restaurant.

"Age before beauty always, you know, madam," was the gallant reply.

And then, woman-like, she smiled and paid her bill without a murmur.

* * * * *

THE SIMPLE LIFE.

I know a place where everyone
A life of Spartan rigour leads;
Where each receives, when work is done,
Sufficient for his needs.

Year in, year out, they rise at dawn,
And go to bed at close of day;
No fancy costumes there are worn,
No hats or waistcoats gay!

As every sort of speech is banned,
No idle gossip greets the ear;
The food is of the simplest brand,
Yet no complaints we hear!

Perchance you think 'tis all a "sell,"
Or just some pretty fairy-tale;
If so, your doubts I'll soon dispel—
These people live in gaol!

Charles Vivian.

* * * * *

VIRTUE ITS OWN REWARD.

"Mr. Scripps," said the senior partner, "the firm is very much pleased with the work you have been doing."

"Thank you, sir," he replied, and the vision of a rise grew more distinct.

"Yes," continued the senior partner, "we are very much pleased with your work—and—well, we thought you would be glad to know that you are giving satisfaction."

EQUAL TO THE OCCASION.

"Mamma, may I go as a milkmaid to the fancy dress ball?"

"You are too small."

"Well, then, I'll go as a condensed milkmaid."

* * * *

UNDERPAID.

KITCHENMAID (at china shop): "What! only a half-crown tip? During the last year I have broken three soup tureens, twenty-six cups, thirty-five saucers, five meat dishes, and fifty-six plates."

SHOPMAN: "Well, then, here's an extra florin; and don't forget me, you know."

* * * * *

ALL HIS TALK LOST.

A shop assistant was showing a lady some parasols. This particular man had a wonderful flow of language, and was ever ready to elaborate on the good qualities of the goods he was showing. As he picked up a parasol from the counter, he held it up before the customer, and surveying it with admiring glances, said:

"Now, there you are. Isn't it lovely? And observe the quality and finish of the silk. Look at the general effect. Pass your hand over the silk and notice how smooth and nice," and he pa-sed it over to the lady. "Really now," he continued, "don't you think it's a beauty?"

"Yes," said the lady. "That's my old one—I laid it on the counter here."

* * *

A "Panes-taking" Youth.

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A FEARFUL TASK.

QUERIST: "What do they call the hardest problem of a man's existence?"

LAZY: "Getting his own consent to crawl out of bed in the morning."

* * *

THE ANSWER.

YEAST: "Why do they call a barber an artist?"

GRISS: "I suppose because he makes a lot of money with his brush."

* * *

CONTINUED HIS OCCUPATION.

MISS MISFITS: "What did the drummer boy do when the war was over?"

COLONEL: "He obtained employment in a bakery and made rolls just the same."

A POSER.

Mrs. Whim: "You needn't say woman has no mechanical genius. I can do anything on earth with only a hairpin."

Mr. Whim: "Well, sharpen this lead-pencil with it."

SHE DID SO.

"Always," said papa, as he drank his coffee and enjoyed his morning bacon, "always, children, change the subject when anything unpleasant has been said. It is both wise and polite."

That evening, on his return from business, he found several of his flower beds despoiled, and the tiny imprint of slippered feet silently bearing witness to the small thief.

"Mabel," he said to her, "did you pick my flowers?"

"Papa," said Mabel, "did you see a monkey in the city to-day? We had a——"

"Never mind that. Did you pick my flowers?"

"Papa, what did grandma send me?"

"Mabel, what do you mean? Did you pick my flowers? Answer me, 'yes' or 'no.'"

"Yes, papa, I did; but I thought I would change the subject."

* * * * *

WHEN SHE PUTS ON HER HAT!

When she puts on her hat
(The new one, you know,
With the big ribbon bow,
And the brim turned up, so—
I forget if the crown's high or flat)
Half-a-minute will be
Sufficient, says she,
To put on her hat.

While she puts on her hat,
You might read all the news
Of the week, did you choose—
Often patience you lose,
And wonder what can she be at.
Such a time as it takes,
And a business it makes
To put on a hat!

So she puts on her hat—
While you've just got to wait;
And then, sure as Fate,
Inquires if it's straight!
And when ready, at last, declares that
The clock must be wrong,
For she *never* takes long
To put on her hat.

A. L. H.

* * * * *

POOR ARTIST!

He could draw the surging ocean,
He could draw the forest dim,
Still life and rapid motion
It was all alike to him.
With ease he'd draw the rustic mill,
Or gloomy sinking wreck.
But notwithstanding all his skill,
He couldn t draw a cheque!

C. V.

* * * * *

BEWILDERING.

PROFESSOR (to his wife): "I never know how to take you, Amelia. Two years ago you were dying for that hat, and now I've bought it, you don't like it at all!"

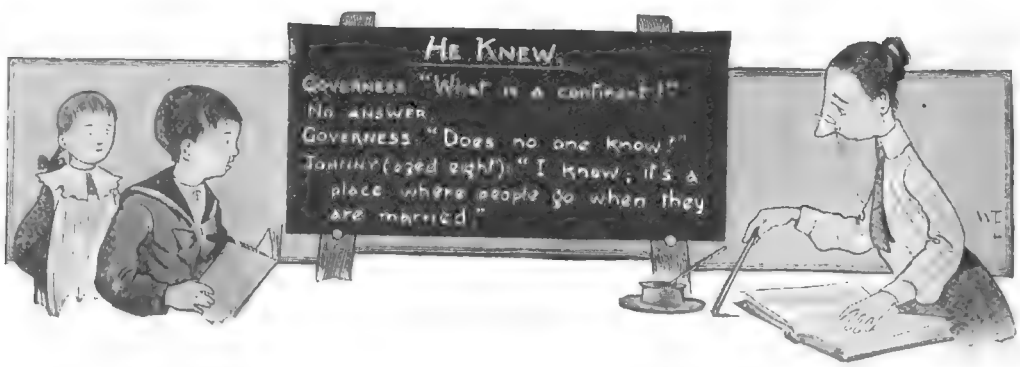
* * * * *

IMPOSSIBLE.

FIRST DUKE: "Why don't you travel *incognito* as I do? It's far pleasanter."

SECOND DUKE: "Yes, but my wife always goes with me—and I married an American."

* * * * *


HE KNEW.
GOVERNESS: "What is a continent?"
NO ANSWER.
GOVERNESS: "Does no one know?"
JOHNNY (aged eight): "I know; it's a place where people go when they are married."

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AN ABSURD ALPHABET.

A was an Ape,
All the way from the Cape;
And, wasn't it funny?
He'd cartloads of money—
Affluent Ape.

B was a Bear,
Who had long, curly hair;
In pigtails he twined it,
With ribbons he'd bind it—
Beautiful Bear.

C was a Cat,
Who had grown very fat
On roast beef and mutton
He was such a glutton—
Comfortable Cat.

D was a Dragon,
Who slept in a wagon;
He awoke with a roar
When he fell through the floor—
Downfallen Dragon.

E was an Eagle,
Who thought he looked regal;
As in mantle and crown
He paraded the town—
Emperor Eagle!

F was a Fox,
Who had thought he could box!
A Kangaroo fought him—
A lesson soon taught him—
Foolhardy Fox.

G was a Goat,
Who went out in a boat;
In the place of a sail
He made use of his tail—
Giddy-brained Goat.

H was a Hare,
Who had no clothes to wear;
So he made him a suit
From a lady's old boot—
Hard-working Hare.

I was an Ibis,
Who of the duck tribe is;
He ate living fishes
Served up on hot dishes—
Infamous Ibis.

J was a Jay,
Who had plenty to say;
All the other birds quailed
Every time that he wailed—
Jabbering Jay.

K was a Kite,
Who was learning to write;
When she wanted a pen
She would catch a fat hen—
Knowing old Kite.

L was a Lamb,
Who was brought up on jam;
When offered some clover
He knocked a man over—
Low little Lamb.

M was a Mole,
Who lived down in a hole;
His very bad habits
Disgusted the rabbits—
Mannerless Mole.

N was a Newt.
Who had got a fine flute;
He played to his neighbours
To brighten their labours—
Neighbourly Newt.

O was an Owl,
An extremely wise fowl;
He started some classes
For horses and asses—
Open-eyed Owl.

P was a Pig,
Fond of dancing a jig;
He danced the Veleta
With Mrs. Ant-Eater—
Privileged Pig.

Q was a Quail—
Someone trod on his tail;
He then burst out crying
And said he was dying—
Querulous Quail.

R was a Ruff,
Round his neck was a muff;
His hat was a feather,
His trousers of leather—
Rakish young Ruff.

S was a Spider,
With young ones beside her;
For fear she should lose them,
With ropes she did noose them—
Sensible Spider.

T was a Turbot,
Devoted to Sherbet;
Her mother did whack her,
She burst like a cracker—
Tragical Turbot.

U was an Ursom
(A porcupine person);
Though useless at cricket
He went to the wicket—
Unabashed Ursom.

V was a Vulture,
With leanings to culture;
He lectured to sailors,
And sometimes to tailors—
Virtuous Vulture.

W was a Worm,
At a school for a term;
Though not the best scholar
He wore a high collar—
Well-to-do Worm.

X was a Xenopus
(Toad from far Menopus);
Fire from his mouth he blew
And clouds of vapour, too—
'Xorcised Xenopus.

Y was a Yak,
With a hump on his back;
He hoped he might hide it
If bright red he dyed it—
Yearning young Yak.

Z was a Zebra,
Who knew some Algebra;
(This rhyme so atrocious
Has made him ferocious)—
Zealous old Zebra.

R. B. N. Everett.

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A SMART YOUTH.

ELDERLY: "I saw you with the charming Miss Hedstrong to-day. I know her parents very well."

YOUNGMAN: "Do you? I wish you'd put in a bad word for me with them."

ELDERLY: "You mean a good word, of course."

YOUNGMAN: "No, I don't. If I can only get her parents to oppose me, I'm sure to win the girl."

* * *

ANXIOUS FOR REWARD.

A clergyman whilst going to church one Sunday morning lost a pocket book containing valuable papers.

After the service he made known his loss and said that whoever found the pocket book and restored it to him would be well rewarded.

An old man immediately rose up at the back of the church and cried out:

"It's found, sir!"

"Oh, thank you, thank you, my man," said the clergyman. "Have you got it with you?"

"No, sir," answered the man, "but I comed that way myself after you did, and it wasn't there then."

* * * * *

HE GOT HIS ANSWER.

"What's poverty where love is?" he exclaimed.

"It's the thing that pushes poor little love into the smallest cupboard and finally out of the house altogether," she replied.

Then he ceased holding her hand and went away wondering if it would be safe for him to strike for a rise of five shillings a week.

* * *

HER REASON.

MABEL: "Well, I've decided to marry Mr. Tightfist."

MILDRED: "Why, thought you hated him?"

MABEL: "Oh, I do; but he is bound to be very rich some day. He has such a grasp of finance."

MILDRED: "What gives you that impression?"

MABEL: "Why, he invited me to go to church last night, and coming home we took a tram, though he wanted to walk both ways. Well, when the conductor came round he said: 'How unfortunate! I find I have nothing smaller than a sovereign. Have you any change?' So I paid the fares."

When I go out upon the stree
I can't help noticing my feet
They are so large and such a weight
It's one man's work to keep them straight.
They never really seem to know
which way I want to make them go,
But wander here and there pell-mell
Of course I have to go as well
My friends and neighbours often say.
They'll be the death of me some day
But Oh! I do feel glad indeed
That I am not a centipede!

DEAR PENCIL NOTES.

GENTLEMAN: "What is the reason you charge twice as much for my cuffs as you did formerly?"

WASHERWOMAN: "Because you have begun making pencil notes on them."

GENTLEMAN: "What difference does that make?"

WASHERWOMAN: "The girls waste so much time trying to make them out."

* * *

BUSINESS INSTINCT.

"I am looking for something nice for a young man," said the young and pretty shopper.

"Why don't you look in the mirror?" asked the gallant shop assistant.

And she was so flustered that he managed to sell her four different things that she did not want before she knew what she was doing.

* * *

CORRECT.

The schoolmaster was asking questions. Masters are apt to ask questions, and they sometimes receive very curious answers.

"Now, boys, how many months have twenty-eight days?"

"All of them, sir," replied the boy in the front.

* * * * *

A PLAUSIBLE THEORY.

SMITH: "Do you believe that dogs are sometimes used in making sausages?"

BROWN: "No, but I suspect they are an important ingredient in hash."

SMITH: "Why do you think that?"

BROWN: "Because hen people are fed on it a few days they begin to growl."

* * *

A DISGRACEFUL IMPOSITION.

MME. PARVENU: "Can I get you and your orchestra to play at my *soirée* next Thursday night?"

ORCHESTRA LEADER: "Certainly."

MME. PARVENU: "Well, you may consider yourself engaged. But I want to make arrangements to hire you by the piece. Do you understand? The last time I engaged you by the hour, and your men took advantage of it, and played slow, soft things most of the time."

For Sale: A Going Concern.

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AT THE MODISTE'S.

Tommy (in agonised whisper, after a quick glance round, at the sight of the headless apparitions): "Oh, Mummy, come away quick; this must be Bluebeard's Chamber!"

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MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

The F.A.F., a Competition Result, and Some Advice to Contributors.

A WORD ABOUT THE F.A.F.

I SHOULD very much like to draw your attention to a contribution in this number which was written especially for the benefit of the Fresh Air Fund. "Aunt Cecilia" is an ingeniously contrived charade, and would do very nicely for garden performances. Would it not be a good idea to get it up and charge every member of the audience ninepence for the privilege of witnessing it? Ninepence, as you all know, is the sum required to give a poor child a happy day in the country.

REAL LIFE ROMANCES.

In the May number I put it to my readers whether in their opinion the Real Life Romances should be continued, discontinued, altered, or left as they are. The overwhelming majority have advised me to continue them in their present form. Such is the verdict, and I am happy to say that it confirms me in my preconceived opinions. I always liked the Romances, and it is now certain that my readers like them as well. They may therefore expect to see them month after month for many a long day to come.

I most heartily thank those who were good enough to write to me on the subject. As a whole the correspondence was extremely interesting and useful. From dozens of letters I was able to glean advice and hints for my future guidance, especially from Mr. Joseph Hanrahan, 43 Patrick Street, St. John's, Newfoundland, and from Miss A. M. Betts, Cliff House, Croxton Road, Thetford, Suffolk.

To each of these correspondents I have much pleasure in forwarding a guinea—the prize which I promised for the two most useful letters on the subject of "The Real Life Romances."

MR. ALFRED DIMMOCK IN BOOK FORM.

All faithful readers of THE ROYAL remember Mr. Alfred Dimmock, that shameless scamp whose practical jokes appeared for several succeeding months in these pages a year or two ago. Mr. Fox Russell, his creator, loth to leave him for ever between the covers of THE ROYAL, has decided to bring him out in book form. By the time this number appears the volume will be on sale, and you will be doing your friends who have not had the good fortune to read Dimmock's escapades in THE ROYAL, a good turn if you induce them to get the book. Dimmock's adventures are about the most screamingly funny series of stories ever written.

SENSATIONAL STORIES.

I have time and again in these pages lectured would-be contributors on the necessity of studying the tone and style of a magazine before they submit their contributions to it. It is pleasing to notice that my advice has been taken to heart seriously. THE ROYAL attempts above all to amuse, and quite nine-tenths of the stories I receive are often of the nature of comedy. So rigorously has my advice been followed that nowadays I seldom receive a really good story of an exciting or serious nature, and have to go for such to old and well-known contributors. But I want new blood, so if any of you have ideas for really strong, exciting stories, write them up and send them along to me. They will receive prompt and special consideration.

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